A BRIEF HISTORY OF NONCONFORMITY, FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE REVOLUTION: WITH REMARKS on CHURCH-ESTABLISHMENTS.

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PREFACE.

IN the year 1771, the author, then a ſtudent at the academy in *Hoxton*, publiſhed a little piece entitled *A Serious and Earneſt Addreſs to Proteſtant Diſſenters of all Denominations*, price three-pence, of which three large editions were ſold in a ſhort time. This has long ſince been out of print, and is not likely to be reprinted, as many pieces have ſince been publiſhed to juſtify a diſſent from the eſtabliſhment; particularly Mr. *Palmer's Catechiſm*; a new edition of Mr. *Towgood*'s celebrated *letters* to Mr. *White*; and his *Anſwer to the Queſtion*, "*Why are you a Diſſenter from the Church* "*of England?*"

Next to underſtanding the principles of diſſent, ſome knowledge of the *Hiſtory* of Nonconformity, contained in a ſhort compaſs, appeared deſirable. The reception given to the above *addreſs* proved ſufficient encouragement to publiſh *a brief and impartial hiſtory of the Puritans*, containing eighty-four pages cloſely printed, *price* four-pence. The greater part of a large edition of this was alſo ſpeedily ſold, and for ſeveral years has been out of print. The author finding that it had been much inquired after, long intended a new and improved edition of it. This is now offered to the public

under a different title. The alterations and additions are numerous. And though the narrative be ſtill ſhort, conſidering the ſubject, it would have coſt abundantly leſs time and trouble if it had been much more diffuſe. From a vaſt maſs of important hiſtorical information it is extremely difficult to reduce into a ſhort compaſs the moſt intereſting and ſtriking facts. This deſign has been diligently purſued and conſtantly kept in view; with what ſucceſs well informed readers can beſt judge. No partiality has been indulged, and no worldly advantage could biaſs. Preſent profits and honours are not the uſual attendants, and leſs than ever in the preſent day, of conſcientious and conſiſtent nonconformity. Authorities are not quoted, for the ſake of brevity, but the writer is confident that nothing is advanced as fact but what will bear the ſtricteſt examination. Various hiſtorians have been diligently conſulted, and every circumſtance related thoroughly weighed. The obſervations and reflections are the effuſions of an honeſt mind, liable indeed, but unwilling, to err.

Mr. NEAL'S truly valuable *Hiſtory of the Puritans* had long become ſcarce; but the judicious and accurate Dr. TOULMIN, has ſupplied the public with a new and greatly improved edition, propoſing a continuance to the preſent time. Numbers however have neither money to purchaſe, nor time to peruſe large works; and even thoſe who have

may

may gladly avail themſelves of a ſhort epitome, recalling the principal facts to memory. Both therefore, may find this brief account acceptable; which if properly encouraged may probably hereafter be brought down to a later period.

The hiſtory of Nonconformity, ſince the Revolution as well as before, merits the attention of all who value liberty and religion. To the patronage of ſuch this well-meant endeavour is commended. The author, having ſet out in life as an advocate for civil and religious liberty, has never repented of adhering firmly to the glorious cauſe; and entertaining a hope that by far the larger part of his earthly pilgrimage has been completed, ardently wiſhes, during the remainder, to employ himſelf in rendering ſome ſervice to mankind, and will rejoice if this attempt prove not wholly uſeleſs. He humbly hopes he may adopt the language of a favourite writer, the juſtly admired Dr. *Jortin*, in his preface to *Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, as applicable to this performance. "Yet was it "deſigned, ſlight and imperfect as it is, for the "ſervice of *Truth*, by one who would be glad "to attend and grace her triumphs; as her ſol-"dier, if he has had the honour to ſerve ſucceſs-"fully under her banner; or as a captive tied "to her chariot wheels, if he has, though unde-"ſignedly, committed any offence againſt her."

*** *If any profit ſhould ariſe from this publication, it will be applied ſolely to charitable purpoſes.*

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INTRODUCTION.

CHRISTIANITY bears evident marks of a divine original, ſince it is calculated to promote the comfort and happineſs of the whole human race; though by the craft and ſubtlety of wicked men, this grand deſign has been lamentably obſtructed. Profeſſors "turning aſide to vain jang-"ling," inſtead of loving one another, and cheriſhing kind affections towards every fellow-creature, have, with implacable malice, hated, perſecuted, and murdered their brethren, for differences in opinion no way affecting the main objects of their faith and hope. The cruelties of prieſts and bigots, have, as is well known, prejudiced ſome againſt the very name of religion, and the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt hath incurred the cenſure of doing more harm than good. Falſe and groundleſs imputation! Perſecution was practiſed in the heathen world, before the Meſſiah came; and if it had not, it is by no means chargeable on his religion: a ſyſtem, the characteriſtic of which is "peace and "good will to men." Whatever doctrines or practices, are unauthorized by the New Teſtament, though they may indeed form a part of religion as eſtabliſhed in national or adopted by particular churches, they are not Chriſtianity. It is then abſurd and unjuſt to impute miſchiefs thereunto, which not only proceed from a different ſource, but are directly oppoſite to its benevolent tendency.

Such is all dominion over the faith, and ſuch are all impoſitions upon the conſciences of men.

Our bleſſed Lord reproved an ambitious ſpirit when it began to appear in his diſciples, *Mat.* xx. 20—28. Uſurpation of improper authority was attempted very early, *Acts* xv. 1. 10. "Diotre-"phes who loved the pre-eminence" withſtood the amiable apoſtle John, 3 Ep. v. 9. St. Paul well knew by the ſpirit of prophecy, that before the final appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, "there "would come a falling away," 2 *Theſ.* ii. 3. and foretells the progreſs of "the man of ſin," in language ſtrikingly deſcriptive of the popes of Rome. The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſsly that "ſome ſhall "depart from the faith," and their particular errors are mentioned, 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. 4. The church at Epheſus ſoon "loſt its firſt love," and doctrines hateful to God were introduced, *Rev.* ii. 4. 6. The ſame was too much the caſe with all the churches, and many were drawn from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt Jeſus. His religion nevertheleſs proſpered, though contending againſt the moſt violent oppoſition, the moſt ſevere perſecution, and the moſt implacable hatred of furious men, actuated by the very worſt paſſions.

"The word ran and was glorified" in theſe trying times. But as ſoon as the emperor *Conſtantine* profeſſed Chriſtianity, it became connected with the ſtate. Now, temporal honours, temporal emoluments, and temporal powers, were beſtowed on the clergy; conſequently the genuine ſpirit of the goſpel actuated them and the people leſs and leſs, till it almoſt quite evaporated.

During the firſt two or three centuries, weekly or monthly offerings, entirely voluntary, were made by Chriſtians for the ſupport of their paſtors, who were choſen by the congregations whom they ſerved. When the church was endowed with ſtated revenues

venues and the clergy grew independent of the people, it has been pathetically ſaid, that an angel in the air cried out, "Woe, Woe, Woe! this day "is venom ſhed into the church of God." Without ſuppoſing this relation authentic (which proves however what a ſtrong ſenſe was immediately entertained of the miſchiefs likely to follow) it may be ſafely affirmed, that never did an angel utter any thing more true. Corrupt doctrines abounded, traditions multiplied, and ignorance increaſed. For ſucceſſive ages the very appearance of real Chriſtianity was loſt, or at beſt hidden in ſome ſecluded corners. A worſe than heathen darkneſs ſucceeded; literature as well as religion being overwhelmed by barbarous ſuperſtition. Excepting the illuſtrious *Roger Bacon*, and the venerable biſhop *Groſthead*, men hated and perſecuted by their contemporaries, thoſe on record who poſſeſſed any kind of learning, applied it to aggrandize themſelves, and retain their fellow-creatures in the bonds of ignorance.

At length, about the year 1370, our countryman *John Wickliffe*, whoſe memory ought ever to be revered, began to oppoſe the high powers, and the intolerable encroachments of the pope, and ſet forth the falſehood of the prevailing doctrines. His preaching and writings excited attention and made diſciples; few, indeed, compared with thoſe who defended the eſtabliſhed ſuperſtitions, yet a candle was lighted which the friends of darkneſs could never extinguiſh. Many converts from the prevailing errors underwent various ſufferings, and ſome endured the fiery trial.

William Sautre, rector of St. Oſithe's, London, had the honour of being the firſt Martyr. The noble Lord *Cobham* claims diſtinguiſhed mention. The prieſts were highly exaſperated at the reſiſtance he boldly made to the corruptions of religion,

and not content with proſecuting him for hereſy alone, craftily alarming the king and the public by groundleſs ridiculous reports of a plot and conſpiracy againſt the ſtate (the uſual mode of unprincipled political eccleſiaſtics, who adopted the ſame procedure againſt the Saviour of Mankind) cauſed him to be condemned both as a heretic and a traitor. He with the intrepidity of an hero, and the reſignation of a Chriſtian, bore unſpeakable torments, hung up alive by the middle with iron chains on a gallows, under which a fire being kindled, he was roaſted to death. Such was the raging zeal of his clerical enemies, that they did not abſtain from curſes and execrations, while this illuſtrious victim hung over the flames, and even endeavoured to prevent the ſurrounding multitude from praying for him. The like implacable malignity was afterwards repeatedly diſplayed.

Wickliffe's writings, which, as Lord *Cobham* declared from his own joyful experience, tended to reform the heart as well as the underſtanding, were not confined to England, but being carried over into Germany, became the ſeeds of a plentiful harveſt. In Bohemia the truth flouriſhed ſurpriſingly. Many were ſecretly put to death in priſon, though their adverſaries had ſolemnly promiſed they ſhould receive no hurt. The two chiefs, *John Huſs* and *Jerome* of *Prague*, notwithſtanding a ſolemn aſſurance of ſafe conduct given by the emperor Sigiſmund, to the former, were burnt alive.

About the year 1517, the renowned *Luther*, incenſed at the abominable lewdneſs and immorality, occaſioned by the pope's indulgences, which were ſold at a fixed price, as a deliverance from the guilt and puniſhment of the moſt henious ſins, and a licence to commit future ones, oppoſed them with all his might. Glorious ſucceſs attended this undaunted champion, and the thick darkneſs of Popery began

began to diſappear. After ſucceſſive ages of ignorance, it could not be expected, that pure uncorrupted truth ſhould immediately prevail. Great was the learning, the piety, and the fortitude of our firſt reformers, and the progreſs made by them aſtoniſhing. Yet thoſe who came after, might nevertheleſs ſee room for alterations, and even if not equal in abilities be diſcerning enough to point out real defects. A dwarf placed on the ſhoulders of a giant, can look further than the giant himſelf. It appears clearly in the lives and writings of the early ſeparatiſts from the Romiſh church, that their own opinions on controverted points varied the more they examined and conſidered. — Branding every attempt to advance further, as an inſult on the memory of thoſe who commenced the reform, is abſurd. They began and carried on an excellent work, but left the perfecting of it to poſterity.

This was attempted by thoſe venerable men, who, on account of their zeal for the purity of God's worſhip, received from their enemies the reproachful name of PURITANS, and endured many cruel ſufferings. Their hiſtory is a copious ſubject, worthy of being largely treated. To Mr. *Daniel Neal* therefore the public ſtand much indebted, as the faithful recorder of ſterling excellence. This eſſay muſt be very brief, but it ſhall be impartial. Their ſufferings ſhall not be aggravated; it would be needleſs. Their faults ſhall not be palliated; it would be unjuſt.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NONCONFORMITY.

CHAPTER I.

HENRY VIII. in the year 1538, actually broke off from the church of Rome, by denying the pope's ſupremacy, and permitted the Bible to be tranſlated into Engliſh. This prince, however, retained a fond attachment to moſt of his former opinions; and the old party preſerved influence enough throughout his reign frequently to deſtroy thoſe in the flames, whom arguments, threats, and various horrid modes of perſecution, failed to ſubdue, or flattering promiſes to allure. Some Papiſts, amongſt whom were the venerable biſhop *Fiſher*, and the virtuous chancellor Sir *T. More*, ſuffered as traitors for denying the royal ſupremacy in church affairs; but rejecting the doctrines of Popery cauſed numerous martyrdoms purely on a religious account. Truth however continued to prevail; the flames in which its advocates expired ſerving widely to diffuſe the light.

Henry was actuated by no higher motives than the gratification of his own pride and ambition, before which he demanded that every underſtanding ſhould

ſhould bow. Providence nevertheleſs made his evil paſſions ſubſervient towards accompliſhing events unſpeakably important to the beſt intereſts of mankind. Thus will terminate, though perhaps by methods unperceived, all the ſecret contrivances and open attempts of every enemy to the real welfare of the human race. The Almighty can, when he pleaſes, abate their pride, aſſuage their malice, and in the final iſſue will moſt effectually confound their devices.

The reformation made a quick progreſs, in the ſhort reign of that pious young prince *Edward* VI. who was as remarkable for his learning, ſweetneſs of temper, and humble deportment, as his zeal for this good work. Articles of religion were drawn up, ſetting forth what were then eſteemed the genuine doctrines of ſcripture, ſome ſuperſtitious practices were laid aſide, and further amendments propoſed in the government and laws of the church. Theſe commendable deſigns, however, were obſtructed by certain temporizing biſhops, who having reluctantly complied with the dictates of *Henry* VIII. were willing to bring others under the ſame yoke, and felt leſs terror at reſiſting the inclinations of a mild young prince, than the demands of his haughty father, whoſe word was law, and whoſe anger was death.

Edward's zeal againſt Popery, in one inſtance, carried him a great deal too far. He would not conſent that his ſiſter *Mary*, ſhould have maſs ſaid in her own family; a liberty ſhe had a natural claim to exerciſe. *Cranmer* and others, who adviſed the granting this reaſonable deſire, appeared rather to be actuated by the political motive of not offending her powerful relation the emperor, than by any tender feeling for the prejudices of the princeſs in favour of the religious ſentiments ſhe had imbibed from her birth. This treatment increaſed her prejudices againſt

againſt the reformed, and though it could not juſtify the burning fury ſhe afterwards diſplayed, might with too much plauſibility have been alleged as a reaſon for refuſing the full exerciſe of religious freedom to thoſe who ſcrupled complying with what ſhe ordained when ſhe came to the crown.

In this reign a controverſy began which gave riſe to a ſeparation in the church. It muſt therefore proceed from ignorance, when any boaſt of the ſuperior antiquity of the church of England, to that of Nonconformity: a weak argument at beſt, though it has influence upon uninſtructed minds. Popery is older than the church of England, Judaiſm than either, and Paganiſm than all. This argument is not, however, merely weak, it is falſe. Biſhop *Hooper* refuſed to be conſecrated in the uſual habits; and if ſome deem this an unreaſonable ſcruple, yet it was certainly an affair of material conſequence, at the infancy of the reformation, when the habits were the known badges of Popery, and the adminiſtrations of the prieſts, thought to receive their validity from thoſe ſuperfluous veſtments. The good biſhop refuſed them for ſeveral important reaſons: becauſe they had no foundation in ſcripture; becauſe they were the inventions of antichriſt; becauſe they had been abuſed to ſuperſtition and idolatry. To continue the uſe of them he thought was to ſymbolize with antichriſt, to miſlead the people and to be inconſiſtent with the ſimplicity of the chriſtian religion. Thoſe eminent reformers *Bucer* and *Peter Martyr*, with the proteſtant divines of Geneva and Switzerland, gave their opinions againſt them as human inventions of an evil tendency, and wiſhed them to be totally and for ever laid aſide.

The wiſe and prudent *Cranmer* was ready to yield; but other leading biſhops oppoſed; ſeverely treating this excellent and conſcientious man, by impriſoning

priſoning him ſome months in the Fleet. At length, upon the earneſt entreaty of his brethren that he would comply, rather than be buried in ſilence, when his preaching was ſo much needed, he conſented to be robed in the habits at his conſecration, and once only at court. Accordingly, being appointed to preach before the king, he came forth, ſays Mr. *Fox*, "like a new player on the ſtage, in "white and ſcarlet, with a ſquare cap on his head; "but he took it patiently for the public ſervice of "the church." He then went to his dioceſe, preaching two or three times a day to vaſt crowds, who were eager for inſtruction. He was faithful and zealous in every branch of epiſcopal duty beyond his ſtrength, and uncommon ſucceſs attended his pious labours, in that age peculiarly ſeaſonable. In the next reign, he became an early ſacrifice, being burnt at *Glouceſter*, patiently enduring torments unuſually ſevere.

A majority of the reforming clergy ſided with *Hooper* in this controverſy. The biſhops *Latimer* and *Coverdale*, the doctors *Taylor*, *Philpot*, *Bradford*, and others, who laid down their lives for the proteſtant faith. Even *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, the latter of whom particularly, had violently ſet himſelf againſt *Hooper*, when they were afterwards degraded, ſmiled at this ridiculous attire, declaring they had long ſince laid aſide all regard to that pageantry. *Ridley* wrote a letter to *Hooper* when in priſon, calling him his dear brother, and fellow-elder in Chriſt, and deſired a mutual forgiveneſs and reconciliation.

Juſtly as the eminent reformers merit eſteem and praiſe, every conſiſtent Proteſtant muſt condemn their perſecuting ſpirit. Some in this reign, contrary to the judgment of the pious king, but owing to the violent zeal of the biſhops, were burnt for oppoſing the trinitarian doctrine, againſt whoſe behaviour

haviour and morals nothing was alleged. This gave the Papiſts too plauſible a plea for aſſerting, that the reformed only complained of perſecution when they were ſufferers. It ſhould be recollected, however, that they imbibed theſe evil principles from a church delighting in blood. Popery is chargeable with grievous errors on this point. *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, and others might poſſibly, never have been perſecutors, had they not once been Papiſts, or lived in an age too dark for the human mind to be ſoon thoroughly enlightened. Their failings, however, afford convincing evidence, how wrong it is to perſiſt in practices, merely becauſe they approved them. We ought to copy the noble example they ſet of correcting eſtabliſhed errors, and not reſt content to ſtop where they did, eſpecially, ſince their opinions altered on further examination, and as biſhop *Burnet* obſerves, they deſigned to procure an act for aboliſhing the popiſh garments. The death of the truly admirable young king, when only ſixteen (after a reign of but ſeven years) fruſtrated all their good purpoſes.

Upon the acceſſion of Queen *Mary*, A. D. 1553, with ſtrict propriety named "the bloody," Popery again triumphed. Beſides the ſufferings of the reformers from impriſonments, ſcourgings, racks, and other ſevere uſage, about three hundred expired in the flames in the ſhort ſpace of four years. Amongſt theſe were five biſhops, with men and women of all ages and different ranks, two boys, and an infant. Biſhop *Bonner* perpetrated the moſt ſhocking act of legal tyranny England ever witneſſed; eleven men and two women being burnt by his command in one fire, at Stratford, near London. Great numbers of the reformed fled into baniſhment, and were entertained by the proteſtant ſtates of Germany, Switzerland, and Geneva, with extraordinary humanity, having churches alſo appointed

pointed them for public worſhip in their own language and manner.

Some of the exiles propoſed ſtill uſing the liturgy of *Edward* VI. whilſt others, thinking themſelves now at liberty, reſolved to throw aſide every remainder of antichriſt and copy the purer forms of the churches amongſt which they now lived. Accordingly, the congregation at Frankfort, by the deſire of the magiſtrates, adopted the Geneva model, with an additional prayer for the afflicted ſtate of the church in England. But when Doctor *Cox*, afterwards biſhop of Ely, came with a freſh detachment, ſtrenuous for the old form, thoſe who had firſt arrived not readily yielding, he rudely interrupted divine ſervice, by anſwering aloud after the miniſter, exciting ſuch a diſturbance and diviſion as could never be healed. One half of the congregation removed to Geneva, leaving Doctor *Cox* and his friends in poſſeſſion of the church at Frankfort, amongſt whom there aroſe quarrels and confuſions, which made them a reproach to other ſocieties, and ſpeedily ended in the diſſolution of their own.

Thus was the firſt ſeparation cauſed by the obſtinacy of a few perſons, who acted contrary to the judgment of the reformers abroad whom they conſulted. Theſe were for aboliſhing every remainder of ſuperſtition, inſtead of obſtinately adhering to forms becauſe once adopted and eſtabliſhed. A peaceable church was diſturbed by men who could no more agree amongſt themſelves than with others, which will always be the caſe when human inventions are impoſed, a grand and perpetual ſource of ſtrife and diviſion.

Queen *Elizabeth*'s acceſſion, A. D. 1558, gave new life to the reformation. As ſoon as it was known beyond ſea, moſt of the exiles returned, but the public religion continued for a while the ſame. It was generally ſuppoſed that ſhe was a favourer of

of the Proteſtants, only her preſent circumſtances demanded caution. When the exiles were going back, conciliatory letters paſſed between them, and thoſe who inclined to what was ſoon after named *Puritaniſm*, beſought the others to unite in endeavouring to obtain ſuch a form of worſhip as was adopted by the beſt reformed churches. The others replied,—it would not reſt with them to appoint ceremonies, and they were determined to ſubmit to things indifferent, yet would join in petitioning the queen that nothing burdenſome ſhould be impoſed. The foreign divines ſtrongly adviſed them to clear the church of all popiſh relics and ſuperſtitions at once, becauſe if the outward ſtate of religion continued mixed, uncertain, and doubtful, ſuch things might be obtruded as would make a relapſe to the old ridiculous practices very eaſy. If with a plea to avoid giving offence, former abuſes were ſuffered, though under a colour of continuing only a ſhort time, it afterwards would be found exceedingly difficult to remove them. The event manifeſted ſuch apprehenſions to be grounded in a thorough knowledge of human nature and the progreſs of error.

The queen at firſt did not condemn the principles of the advocates for ſtricter purity; but when her government was ſettled, ſhe roundly declared, the ſtandard was fixed, and inſiſted that all her ſubjects ſhould conform to it. Rites and ceremonies ſhe thought indifferent, and thoſe of the Romiſh church preferable to others, becauſe venerable and pompous. Her majeſty therefore choſe to retain images, crucifixes, and croſſes, muſic and the old garments; the three former were afterwards partly ſet aſide by her order.

When King *Edward*'s liturgy was revived, nothing was altered to gratify the Puritans, though paſſages were omitted diſagreeable to the Papiſts; particularly

particularly this petition, " from the tyranny of " the biſhop of Rome, and all his deteſtable enor- " mities, good Lord deliver us." Conciliatory proceedings and ſoftening methods are generally laudable, yet ſurely the friends of a ſtrict adherence to ſcripture merited at leaſt equal attention with the adherents to vain ſuperſtitions and barbarous ſeverity.

The clergy of that time violently oppoſed all reformation, though not above three hundred quitted their preferments, of whom fourteen were biſhops. Thoſe of higher rank had changed ſo often, as to be aſhamed of doing it again, and held in a body, hoping to prove a powerful check. They had likewiſe in view the once more gaining an aſcendency, *Elizabeth* being childleſs, and *Mary* of Scotland, a zealous Papiſt, her next heir. It thus happened, that the act of ſubſtituting our preſent eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment for the Popiſh one which preceded it, was paſt with the diſſent of all the biſhops, and therefore the ſtyle of Lords Spiritual is omitted throughout the whole. (*Blackſtone's Commentaries* B. i. Ch. 2. Note.) This fact without calling in further aid, from the general tenor of Britiſh hiſtory, ſets at nought all the advocates for that groundleſs fiction of an alliance between the ſtate and the church.

Every eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment in the world is a creature of ſtate policy, though ſome retain more genuine Chriſtianity in their compoſition than others. The leſs there is in any of them of human invention, the better are they calculated to promote the important deſigns of religion as to the world, which civil governors ſhould ſolely regard; namely peace, order, benevolence, and good morals. Real, and not ſtate religion, can alone produce what reſpects another life, humility towards God, purity of heart, and rational, manly, ſublime devotion. Inſti-

tutions merely human are not calculated to advance, but commonly tend to ſubvert true piety, with all its genuine effects and glorious energies.

Several of the exiles who were offered the vacant biſhoprics, refuſed them on account of the habits and ceremonies. Others reluctantly accepted, thinking by their intereſt with the queen to obtain amendments. Biſhop *Burnet* obſerves, in his travels, that when at Zurich, he ſaw a vaſt collection of letters, many of them from thoſe complying biſhops, lamenting the queen's fixedneſs, hoping the laws enacting them would be repealed, if the Popiſh party did not hinder it; and the worthy *Grindal*, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury, writes, "That "all the biſhops who had been abroad, on their "return, dealt with the queen, to let the matter "of habits fall." In a letter from that eminent divine, biſhop *Jewel*, he calls theſe veſtments, "The "relics of the Amorites, wiſhes they were extir-"pated to the deepeſt roots, and confeſſes that all "things were ſo looſe and uncertain here, that he "did not know whether he ſhould not be obliged "to go back to Zurich." Dr. *Cox* notwithſtanding his zeal for the liturgy, oppoſed images, crucifixes, and lights in the churches, as Popiſh innovations.

Had they united counſels, and ſtood firmly by each other, theſe grievances which ſat ſo heavy might have been removed. But though at firſt the reformed divines were moderate and humble in appearance, not being accuſtomed to grandeur, as they grew rich, they raiſed their deportment, and ſome cruelly lorded it over their brethren. *Aylmer*, a ſpirited writer againſt the wealth of the higher clergy, being made biſhop of London, when aſked how he could conſiſtently retain ſuch large revenues, made a witty but impudent application of St. Paul's words to his own caſe, "When I was "a child,

" a child, I ſpake as a child, I underſtood as a " child, I thought as a child, &c."

The leading principles of the Puritans were as follows: They entertained no diſlike to the name or function of a biſhop, if he were only a ſtated preſident of the college of preſbyters in his dioceſe, and managed the affairs of it with their direction and aſſiſtance. They did not object againſt preſcribed forms of prayer, on condition the miniſter was allowed to alter or vary ſome expreſſions, and uſe a prayer of his own, before and after ſermon. Nor had they any antipathy to ſuch decent and diſtinct habits for the clergy, as derived not their origin from Popery, to which they were determined adverſaries, and to every thing tending that way. They were ſober in their deportment, ſtrict obſervers of the Lord's-day, warm, affectionate preachers, and Calviniſtical in their principles, according to the plain, and for a long while undiſputed meaning of the thirty-nine articles, which they ſubſcribed ſincerely, without artful gloſſes or ſhuffling evaſions.

A conſiderable ſect aroſe, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Browniſts*, from one *Brown*, a hot, fiery young man, who afterwards conformed, got preferment, led a wicked life, and died in a gaol, to which he was committed for ſtriking a conſtable. They thought every church ought to be confined within the limits of a ſingle congregation, over which no others had any authority. In this particular all the Diſſenters of the preſent age agree with them. Moreover, they did not allow the prieſthood to be a diſtinct order, but maintained, that as the vote of the brotherhood gave a man authority to preach and adminiſter the ſacraments, ſo the ſame might deprive him of it. Their chief fault was uncharitableneſs, inſomuch that they would not communicate or join in prayer with the

church of England, or any of the reformed, declaring they were not the churches of Chriſt, as they had departed from the ſimplicity of the goſpel. Their minds had been greatly irritated by the ſevere treatment of thoſe who could not comply with the epiſcopal injunctions. Perſecution will never make converts, though it may hypocrites, and has a natural tendency to drive men from any church, inſtead of reconciling them to it.

The Puritans allowed lay-communion; but the act of uniformity obliged many excellent miniſters to withdraw from the church, for which they were ſilenced, and endured lamentable hardſhips through the whole of this long reign. Thoſe who eſpouſed their ſentiments, would privately attend their miniſtrations, meeting in the ſame places where the Proteſtants aſſembled in bloody *Mary*'s reign. Several of the moſt eminent preachers ſided with them, particularly father *Miles Coverdale*, who under *Edward* VI. was biſhop of Exeter, and one of the firſt, after Wickliffe, who tranſlated the Bible into Engliſh; for which good work he deſerved the love of every Chriſtian. On *Mary*'s ſucceeding, he ſcarcely eſcaped the fire, and went abroad; yet was neglected by *Elizabeth*, becauſe he was ſcrupulous about ceremonies and habits. At length he got a ſmall living in the city, the habits for a while not being inſiſted upon. Vaſt crowds attended him, but perſevering in his refuſal, after about two years he was turned out. The people often ſent to his houſe on Saturday, to know where he would preach the next day, but he durſt not inform them, leſt his ſuperiors ſhould take offence, ſo that his grey hairs were brought down with ſorrow to the grave at the age of eighty-one. The funeral of this learned and pious confeſſor, was honoured by the attendance of great numbers of ſincere mourners.

Another

Another was the Rev. *John Fox*, author of the *Book of Martyrs*; a truly valuable and moſt laborious work, which gave the deepeſt wound to Popery it had ever received. He was exceedingly eſteemed by the queen, and might have obtained rich preferment, but he was unwilling to ſubſcribe the canons, and diſliked ſome of the ceremonies. Labouring under ſevere poverty and want, through the intereſt of a powerful friend, a prebend of Sarum was at length beſtowed on him, which he held to his death, yet not without trouble. Archbiſhop *Parker* ſummoned him to ſubſcribe, when the venerable old man producing the New Teſtament, ſaid, "To this I will ſubſcribe." A ſubſcription to the canons being demanded, he refuſed, ſaying, "I have nothing in the church, ſave a prebend of "Saliſbury, and much good may it do you, if you "will take it from me." This however was not done, as it would have been too ſcandalous, after the ſervices rendered by Mr. *Fox* to the Proteſtant cauſe, which were above all eſtimation.

Many others, however, were deprived on the like accounts; and great numbers of the common people, who abhorred the habits equally with the miniſters, became at a loſs where to attend. After waiting to ſee if the queen would take compaſſion on them, having no hopes of redreſs, a part held a ſolemn conſultation, in which after prayer and ſerious debate, about the lawfulneſs and neceſſity of ſeparating from the church, they agreed,— "That ſince they could not have the word of God "preached, nor the ſacraments adminiſtered, with- "out idolatrous gear, they ſhould aſſemble as they "had opportunity, in private houſes or elſewhere, "to worſhip God according to their conſciences; "and ſince they were cut off from the church, to "ſet up what they thought the pureſt worſhip,

" they laid aſide the Common-Prayer and ſervice " of the church."

If there were any ſchiſm in this, it proceeded from the impoſing temper of the clergy, who whilſt they acknowledged theſe things to be indifferent, would nevertheleſs force them upon others, full as learned, pious, and worthy as themſelves, who really ſcrupled the terms demanded as diſhonourable to Chriſt and hurtful to religion. Never was preaching more wanted, and yet the moſt able men were ſilenced, becauſe they could not comply with the injunctions of the biſhops. Mr. *G. Cranmer*, a Conformiſt, in a letter to the celebrated Mr. *Hooker*, prefixed to his eccleſiaſtical polity, ſpeaking of Puritaniſm, obſerves, " That at firſt the greater " part of the learned of the land, were either " eagerly affected or favourably inclined that way."

In the large and populous town of Northampton, there had not been a preacher for a conſiderable time, though the people applied to their diocеſan by the moſt humble ſupplications. In a petition in the county of Cornwall it is ſaid, " We " are ninety thouſand ſouls ready to periſh for " want of the word of God, and though we have " one hundred and ſixty churches, to the maintenance of which there is yearly allowed 920ol. " (on an average 57l. *per ann.* to each, equal to " 200l. now) the greateſt part of them are ſupplied by men who are guilty of the groſſeſt ſins, " fornicators, adulterers, felons, bearing the marks " in their hands of the ſaid offences; drunkards, " gameſters on the Sabbath-day; many who preach " but once a quarter. We have ſome miniſters " who labour faithfully in the Lord's huſbandry; " but theſe men are not ſuffered to attend their " callings, becauſe the mouths of Papiſts, infidels, " and filthy livers, are open againſt them, and the " ears of thoſe who are called lords over them, are " ſooner

" ſooner open to ſuch accuſers than to their de-
" fences. Nor is it ſafe for us to go and hear
" them, for though our own fountains are dried up,
" yet if we ſeek for the waters of life elſewhere,
" we are cited into the ſpiritual courts, reviled, and
" threatened with excommunication. Therefore
" from far we come, beſeeching this honourable
" houſe to diſpoſſeſs theſe dumb dogs, and appoint
" them faithful miniſters, who might preach the
" word without moleſtation from any eccleſiaſtical
" commiſſioners."

Even the city of London preſented a like petition, ſetting forth, " That half of their churches
" were unſupplied with preaching miniſters; in
" the other half partly by reaſon of the nonreſi-
" dents, which were not few, partly, through the
" mean qualifications of others, there is ſcarce a
" tenth man who makes conſcience to wait upon
" his charge; whereby the Lord's ſabbath is often-
" times wholly neglected, for the moſt part miſer-
" ably mangled, and darkneſs coming in like an
" armed man." Upon a diligent ſurvey made in the twenty-eighth year of this reign, it appeared that there were but two thouſand preachers to ſerve ten thouſand pariſhes; ſo that eight thouſand churches were deſtitute of preaching miniſters. In ſome places if perſons would hear a ſermon, they muſt go five, twelve, yea in ſome counties twenty miles, and at the ſame time be fined twelve pence a ſabbath for being abſent from their own pariſh churches. The cauſe of this ſcarcity was the rigour of the high commiſſion, and the narrow terms of conformity. Moſt of the old incumbents were repreſented " as diſguiſed Papiſts, fitter to ſport
" with the timbrel and harp, than to take into
" their hands the book of God;" and yet there was a riſing generation of valuable preachers ready for the miniſtry, if encouraged; for in a ſupplication

tion of ſome Cambridge ſtudents to parliament about this time, they declare, " That there were plenty " of able and well furniſhed men among them, but " unlearned men, nay the ſcum of the people, were " preferred. They were obliged to ſtand idle, " being urged with ſubſcriptions to approve the " Romiſh hierarchy and all its effects to be agree- " able to the word of God, which (ſay they) with " no ſafety or conſcience, we can accord unto." They then offered an amicable conference or diſputation, as the queen and parliament might agree, to ſettle theſe differences, which propoſal her majeſty and the biſhops declared againſt.

What a miſerable ſtate of things was this! Hundreds of learned, pious, conſcientious miniſters, were ſilenced and ſtarving with their families, when the people applied ſo earneſtly for aſſiſtance, while idle, wicked men were preferred, merely becauſe they complied with certain terms (and with what terms will not bad men comply for gain?) which the diligent and worthy ſcrupled. Loud were the cries of theſe poor ſufferers to their earthly ſuperiors for relief. But notwithſtanding their numbers, their piety, and the great want of their labours; notwithſtanding their petitions were ſigned by the people, by the juſtices of peace and the gentlemen in ſeveveral counties, by the lord-mayor and aldermen of London, by many of the conforming clergy, by the privy-council, and by divers of the nobility, the biſhops remained unmoved.

The Houſe of Commons appeared determined to relieve the Puritans, and bills were prepared for that purpoſe. This attempt alarmed the bench, and the queen took ſuch offence, that ſhe ſent a moſt arbitrary meſſage to the houſe, ordering that no bills concerning religion ſhould be received before they had been firſt conſidered and approved by the clergy in convocation. This was a blow at the very

very root of parliamentary freedom, and awakened a noble ſpirit of liberty amongſt the members. That real patriot Sir *Peter Wentworth* in a ſpeech on this occaſion, obſerved, "That there were but "ſmall hopes of a reformation. Baniſhing the "pope and reforming true religion, ſaid he, had "its beginning from this houſe, but not from the "biſhops; few laws for religion had their foun-"dation from them; and I do ſurely think, be-"fore God I ſpeak it, that the biſhops were the "cauſe of this doleful meſſage." Sir Peter was ſent to the Tower for this ſpeech, the truth of which eccleſiaſtical hiſtory abundantly confirms*. The clergy of every communion incorporated with the

* Mr. *Lodge*, in his *Illuſtrations of Britiſh Hiſtory*, Vol. iii. No. 257, has preſerved a curious letter from *James Morice*, a lawyer of conſiderable eminence, to *Lord Burleigh*, complaining of his impriſonment. The biſhops and the eccleſiaſtical judges were about this time accuſed in the Houſe of Commons, "As "diſhonorors of God and her majeſtie, violaters and perverters "of law and public juſtice, and ronge doers unto the liberties "and freedoms of all her majeſties ſubjects, by their extorted "othes, wrongfull impriſonments, lawleſſe ſubſcription, and "unjuſt abſolucions."—He further writes: "Billes of aſſize "of bread, ſhipping of fiſhe, pleadings and ſuch like may be "offered and received into the houſe; and no offence to her "majeſtie's royall commandment (being but as the tything of "mynte,) but the great cauſe of the law and public juſtice "may not be touched without offence. Well my good Lord "be it ſo; yet I hope her majeſtie and you of her ho: privy "counſell, will at lengthe thoroughly conſider of theſe things, "leaſt as wher hearetofore we prayed *from the tyranny of the* "*B. of Rome good Lord deliver us*, we be compelled to ſay, "*from the tyranny of the clergy of England good Lord deliver us.* "Pardon my playne ſpeache, I humbly beſeache your honor, "for it proceedeth from an upright hart and ſownd conſcience, "althoughe in a weake and ſycklie bodie, and by God's grace, "whileſt life doth laſt, wch I hope now after ſo many crackes "and crazes will not be longe, I will not be aſhamed in good "and lawfull ſorte to ſtryve for the freedom of conſcience, "publicke juſtice, and the liberties of my country." This language of genuine patriotiſm merits recording.

civil

civil power, have uniformly oppoſed all reformation, though individuals in all ages have ſtood forth champions, and boldly encountered ſevere trials, even unto death, in the glorious cauſe of liberty and truth.

All the Puritans were not endued with like reſolution, ſome through frailty, overcome by hard uſage, ſubmitted; but the majority caſt themſelves and their dependents upon Providence. They encountered ſevere trials; being kept in noiſome gaols, and thoſe who had not a penny when committed, or any thing to procure a maintenance for themſelves or families, periſhed in confinement, and their children were ſtarved, the pariſh poor laws not being enacted till late in this reign, and the ſufferers too numerous for mere voluntary benevolence effectually to relieve.

The laity ſtanding up firm in defence of what they eſteemed truth, ſixty and upwards remained ſhut up in the priſons of London, from their trades and from their families; part of them two years and a half in deplorable penury and loathſomeneſs; ſome in dungeons and irons; ſome in hunger and famine; never called to a trial, but denied an audience before the magiſtrates, which even murderers may claim. They were beſides daily defamed and falſely accuſed in pamphlets diſperſed abroad to excite a prejudice againſt them. Moreover, what moſt nearly concerned them as perſons of unaffected piety, they were bereaved of all ſpiritual comfort from doctrine, ſocial prayer, or mutual conference; and thus did many of them end their lives. Several were publicly executed at Tyburn, charged indeed with writing books againſt the queen and government, but the accuſation was utterly falſe; no ſubjects could be more loyal, and they prayed ſo earneſtly at their death for her majeſty's long and proſperous reign, that ſhe repented having yielded to this extreme rigour. Indeed, ſhe

was

was not properly acquainted with their caſe; for their petition to the throne for deliverance from their miſeries was intercepted.

An act being paſſed making it felony to write or publiſh any book defaming the queen, it was ſoon determined, that libels againſt the biſhops, who were royal officers, tended to defame the queen herſelf. Amongſt the Puritans executed upon this conſtruction was Mr. *Penry*, no way proved to be the author of ſuch a libel, but by the evidence of one who had ſeen papers of that ſort in his ſtudy, but refuſed to give evidence in open court; and by the hearſay evidence of two others, who, abſconding, wrote word, that they were ſorry for what they had ſaid.

It is no matter of wonder that ſome among the Puritans were indiſcreet and violent. "Oppreſſion "will make a wiſe man mad." At firſt they petitioned in the humbleſt forms, when meeting nothing but cruel treatment in return, warm ſpirits grew impatient. Scurrilous pamphlets were written and diſperſed after ſupplications availed nothing, to which anſwers appeared in a like ſtyle by favourers of the biſhops. Pamplets publiſhed under the name of *Martin-Mar-Prelate*, were cenſured by judicious Puritans as tending rather to provoke their opponents than ſerve their cauſe. A few hot headed men often fruſtrate the deſigns of the wiſe and prudent, and give pain to peaceable, humble, quiet perſons, and ſuch by far the largeſt part of theſe ſufferers were.

It became a cuſtom amongſt miniſters to hold meetings in market-towns, which were called "pro- "pheſyings," for interpreting and commenting on texts of ſcripture, not a little to their own as well as their hearers advantage. Theſe the queen quickly put down, being informed they were nurſeries of Puritaniſm, and tended to promote alterations in

in church government, and ſubvert her ſupremacy, in which ſhe was as tenacious as any pope. Archbiſhop *Grindal*, a moderate worthy prelate, and others of the bench, declared that by theſe exerciſes the clergy were conſiderably improved in ſcriptural knowledge, and that nothing had beaten down Popery like them. She ſuſpended the honeſt archbiſhop for defending, and would on no account ſuffer them, ſaying, "It was good for the church to "have but few preachers, three or four in a county "being ſufficient." Her majeſty would rule, and ſhe was afraid, as ſhe confeſſed, that by hearing ſermons, the people might become too knowing, and learn to diſpute her authority. All poſſible care was therefore taken, that there ſhould be little preaching or any thing like it. Sundry well diſpoſed people, uſed to meet together after working hours, to read the Scriptures and confirm each other in Chriſtian faith and practices. They declared they did not ſeparate from the church, but would be glad to learn the duties owing to God, their prince, families, and neighbours, and on holidays and ſeaſons of leiſure when buſineſs was over, employ that time in a ſober reading of the Scriptures, which was heretofore ſpent at the ale-houſe, in cards, dice, and other vain paſtimes. They were, however, obliged to deſiſt; drinking at the ale-houſe, being thought better than holding theſe aſſemblies.

Such was the ſtate of religion during this reign; yet Elizabeth's talents excited in her ſubjects a high degree of veneration. Though ſhe countenanced various engines of perſecution, and ſtretched her prerogative beyond all law, yet her wiſdom and policy not only extricated the kingdom from great difficulties, but rendered it more reſpectable and formidable than ever. She will on ſeveral accounts continue to be admired; eſpecially for her frugal management

management of the public money, which perhaps it can in no inſtance be proved, ſhe ever applied but to the moſt neceſſary and important national purpoſes.

" So abſolute was the authority of the crown in " this reign, that the precious ſpark of liberty had " been kindled, and was preſerved by the Puritans " alone, and it was to this ſect, that the Engliſh " owe the whole freedom of their conſtitution." Such is the teſtimony which nothing but the force of truth could draw from Mr. *Hume*. See his Hiſtory, Vol. v. p. 161. 189. 8vo.

CHAP. II.

JAMES I. having been bred in the diſcipline of the church of Scotland, the biſhops felt a little chill at the approach of " this Scotch miſt," as one of them called him; fearing their luſtre would be obſcured. The Puritans hoped that their ſufferings might now end, or at leaſt ſome favourable alterations take place. His *ſacred majeſty*, (a title which this monarch firſt aſſumed) had heretofore in a moſt ſolemn manner declared, that he believed the church of Scotland, to be the pureſt in the world, and had ſpoken ſlightly concerning the church of England, particularly in ſtyling the Common-Prayer, " An evil maſs ſaid in Engliſh." In a ſpeech to the parliament of Scotland, he declared, " He would not bring in Papiſtical or Eng- " liſh biſhops." Nay, on taking leave, he aſſured his countrymen, " That he left both church and " ſtate in ſuch a manner, as he did not intend " to alter any way," and charged all the miniſters, nobility, and gentry, " To maintain it in the ſame

" purity." But as if he would ſet an example to his ſucceſſors, who certainly followed it very cloſely, in want of good faith, he was ſo far from endeavouring after a reform in England, that contrary to the ſenſe of the Scotch nation, the moſt ſolemn oaths at his coronation, and repeated voluntary promiſes, he impoſed epiſcopacy upon them.

The alteration of his mind ſo ſoon after he reached England, may be eaſily accounted for. Being a greedy lover of flattery, the prelates amply gratified that taſte. When he ſided with them they praiſed his wiſdom and learning above meaſure, calling him the *Solomon of the age*. *Bancroft*, biſhop of London, fell upon his knees, and ſaid, " I pro-" teſt my heart melteth for joy that Almighty God " of his ſingular mercy hath given us ſuch a king " as ſince Chriſt's time hath not been." Archbiſhop *Whitgift* became ſo tranſported as to declare, " Undoubtedly your majeſty ſpeaketh by the ſpe-" cial aſſiſtance of God's Spirit." *James* was highly delighted, congratulating himſelf, that " He was " now come into the promiſed land; that he ſat " among grave and reverend men, and was not " a king as formerly without ſtate, nor in a place " where beardleſs boys would brave him to his " face." The Puritan party in Scotland hardly treated their ſovereign with due reſpect, and ſo far from flattering, kept him in humble ſubjection, who was an infant when his unfortunate mother *Mary* fled from her kingdom. Neither ſide at that period adopted generous principles of liberty. The Puritans were deſirous of making the ſcripture the only acknowledged rule. The Prelatiſts ſtood up as advocates for antiquity, fathers, and human authority; the ſcriptures alone affording no ſufficient countenance to their bold claims of worldly wealth, dignity, and power. To derive aid from the throne, the biſhops ſupported its moſt tyrannical

tyrannical claims and meaſures, till the oppreſſed, loſing all patience, for a while levelled both crown and mitre in the duſt together.

A conference was held at *Hampton-Court* between the biſhops and the Puritans, in the royal preſence. Nine prelates and eight dignitaries appeared in behalf of the church: of their opponents four miniſters only. The Puritans were not refuted by arguments; for Doctor *Raynold*, one of the number, was the oracle of his time, for acquaintance with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, councils, and fathers; but they were inſulted, ridiculed, and laughed to ſcorn, with little wit or good manners. The miniſters being dreſſed in long furred gowns, one of the courtiers obſerved that they looked more like Turks than Chriſtians. The king heard the biſhops attentively; but when the Puritans ſpoke, he often interrupted them with revilings, and the prelates behaved like their maſter. Doctor *Raynold* beginning to ſtate, that "it was too much "work for a biſhop—," *Bancroft* fell upon his knees, and earneſtly begged his majeſty to ſtop the doctor's mouth. In this inſtance the king acted fairly, and perceiving his lordſhip to be in a great heat, deſired him to let the doctor proceed, and anſwer his objections, which he then attempted.

This mock conference ſerved for *James* to diſplay his talents for diſputation, of which he was extremely conceited, and for the courtiers to throw out their taunts upon the poor Puritans, whoſe relief was by no means intended, ſince all things had been previouſly ſettled. The advocates for reform were only brought upon the ſtage as ſubjects of deriſion, and the laſt day they were called in, not to diſpute, but to hear the few intended alterations or explanations of the Common-Prayer book. The miniſters importunately ſupplicated, that the ſurplice and croſs might not be impoſed

on ſuch pious divines as ſcrupled them; upon which, the king, with a ſtern countenance, threatened if they continued obſtinate after ſome time, he would have them forced to conformity. Biſhop *Rudd*, of St. David's, ſhortly after delivered an excellent ſpeech in convocation, entreating that uſing the ſign of the croſs might not be preſſed, ſo many uſeful preachers entertaining invincible ſcruples on this head. He was anſwered by four biſhops, and then forbidden to make any reply. James during the public conference, acted both as party and judge, and *I approve*, or *I diſſent*, was thought ſufficient to anſwer all the arguments of the Puritans. No wonder if being thus treated, they appeared to ſome diſadvantage on this occaſion. But their writings afforded full proof of their deep learning and acute reaſoning. On the abilities of Dr. *Raynold* the higheſt encomiums have been paſſed by his learned contemporaries of the oppoſite party; his modeſty and humility were alſo eminent, ſo that it was ſaid by Cracanthorp, an extraordinay judge of merit, "That to name "*Raynold* was to command virtue itſelf." Mr. Calderwood, a Scotchman, forced to leave his country on account of religion, publiſhed a famous treatiſe entitled *Altare Damaſcenum*. Of the ſtrength and learning diſplayed in that treatiſe, the king was ſo ſenſible, that appearing ſomewhat penſive after reading it, and being aſked the reaſon by a certain prelate, was deſired not to let that trouble him, for they would anſwer it. He replied, not without ſome paſſion, "What will you anſwer, "man? There is nothing here than ſcripture, "reaſon, and fathers." James, however, valued his own prerogative above what theſe dictated, and in vain was it for his ſubjects to adopt ſuch aid againſt his ſovereign will. He enforced as far as poſſible this maxim, "That as it was blaſphemy

"to

" to diſpute what God could do, ſo it was ſedition " to diſpute what kings could do;" and he found a number of eccleſiaſtics full as ready to ſupport the latter part of the poſition, as the former.

A pleaſant ſtory to this purpoſe was related by Mr. *Waller* the poet; going to ſee James at dinner, on the day the parliament had been diſſolved, the biſhops *Andrews* and *Neile* ſtanding behind the king's chair, he aſked them, " My lords, cannot I take " my ſubjects money when I want it, without all " this formality in parliament?" *Neile*, a complete court-ſycophant, readily anſwered, " God forbid, " Sir, but you ſhould; you are the breath of our " noſtrils." Whereupon the king turned and ſaid to *Andrews*, " Well, my lord, what ſay you?" " Sir," replied he, " I have no ſkill to judge of " parliamentary caſes." The king anſwered, " No put offs, my lord, anſwer me preſently." " Then, Sir," ſaid he, " I think it lawful for you " to take my brother *Neile*'s money, for he offers " it." Mr. Waller adds, " The company was " much pleaſed with this anſwer, but the king " ſeemed particularly ſtruck with the wit of it."

Dr. *Whitgift*, a man of conſiderable abilities, but ſeverely rigorous, was ſucceeded in the ſee of Canterbury by *Bancroft*, a dexterous flatterer at court, yet of a rough temper, coveteous, ill-natured, and a ſubverter of the laws and conſtitution of his country. He carried on the proceedings againſt the Puritans without remorſe or pity, enforcing a ſtrict obſervance of the church feſtivals, reviving the uſe of copes, ſurplices, caps, and hoods, and obliging all miniſters to declare, they did willingly and from the heart believe, that " The " book of Common-Prayer, and of the ordina- " tions of prieſts and deacons, contained nothing " contrary to the word of God," beſides other matters of a ſimiliar nature.

By theſe exactions above three hundred miniſters were ſilenced or deprived, ſome excommunicated or caſt into priſon, others forced to leave their native country, and their ſubſiſtence, and go into baniſhment, which they choſe, rather than violate conſcience. Thoſe who appeared inclined to ſeparate from the church were treated with the utmoſt rigour. A gentleman and two miniſters of Yarmouth, were charged with keeping a conventicle, becauſe, on a Lord's-day, they repeated at home the heads of the ſermon preached in the church. Two of them were ſhut up in priſon, and confined a long time without being admitted to bail. When brought to their trial, Mr. *Fuller*, of Gray's-Inn, an eminent counſellor, undertaking their cauſe, moved that the priſoners ought to be diſcharged, becauſe the high commiſſioners were not empowered by law, to impriſon, fine, or miniſter the oath *ex officio* to any of his majeſty's ſubjects: an oath tendered to perſons, obliging them to anſwer all ſuch queſtions as ſhould be put, by which means, contrary to law and juſtice, they became forced to turn their own accuſers. This truly conſtitutional declaration alarmed that tyrannical court, and accordingly enraged *Bancroft*, who told the king, that Mr. Fuller was the champion of the Nonconformiſts, and ought to be made an example, to terrify others. Accordingly he was cloſely impriſoned, neither could the interceſſions of his friends nor his own moſt humble petitions obtain a releaſe to the day of his death. What tyranny could exceed this?

Theſe ſhocking exceſſes of church-power obliged ſundry learned miniſters and their followers to leave the kingdom and retire to Holland, where churches were erected after the Preſbyterian model. Others fled to America, and endured incredible hardſhips. Of one hundred and twenty, who ſet out

out together for New-England, through want of neceſſaries, the fatigues of the voyage, and the inclemency of the weather, within two or three months, half the company died, and not above ſix or ſeven at a time were able, through illneſs, to ſuccour the reſt. As the ſpring came on, the ſurvivors recovered ſtrength, and receiving freſh ſupplies from friends in England, maintained their ground, and laid the foundation of a noble ſettlement.

Several families who ſettled in Virginia, inviting their acquaintance to join them; *Bancroft*, being informed that great numbers had embarked, obtained a proclamation forbidding any Engliſh ſubjects to tranſport themſelves to Virginia. Thus to hinder men, when flying both from ſuffering and offending, was the utmoſt perverſeneſs of malice, worthy only of the Inquiſition.

In the year 1618, to ſtop the growth of Puritaniſm, and ſilence the objections of Papiſts againſt the reformed ſtrictneſs, which could weigh only with the moſt profligate or inconſiderate, his majeſty publiſhed a declaration, to encourage recreations and ſports after ſervice on the Lord's-day: *e. g.* Morris-dances, revels, May-games, Whit-ſun-ales, wakes, leapings, vaultings, ſetting up May-poles in the church-yards, or near the church. This declaration was ordered to be read in Lancaſhire, which abounded with Papiſts, and afterwards in every pariſh church throughout England. Such a proceeding muſt have grieved all ſober perſons, ſince the neglect of the Sabbath ruins the morals of the common people, overwhelming them in ignorance and vice. It was indeed ordered that thoſe who did not attend divine ſervice, ſhould not be preſent at theſe ſports; but ſurely, all that concerns religion is not finiſhed with the public ſervice: a quick return to buſineſs or diverſions tends to efface every moral and ſerious impreſſion; and unleſs

ſober,

ſober, virtuous, pious diſpoſitions and habits are produced or confirmed, all outward forms are uſeleſs and even hurtful, ſerving merely to confirm the ignorant and thoughtleſs in vain ſuperſtitions. Archbiſhop *Abbot*'s conduct therefore, who forbad the reading of the king's declaration in his pariſh church at Croydon, was wiſe, patriotic, religious, and at this time not ineffectual.

K. JAMES died in 1624. It is hard to form any judgment about his religion. One while he was a Preſbyterian, then a zealous Churchman; at firſt a Calviniſt, afterwards an Arminian; and at laſt almoſt, if not an entire Papiſt, openly declaring he ſhould be content to meet the church of Rome half way. This might partly ariſe from pride. He could not bear that his ſon ſhould marry any lady inferior to the daughter of a king, and was particularly deſirous of an union with the grand monarchs of Spain or France. To ingratiate himſelf with them, favourable profeſſions reſpecting Popery appeared neceſſary. The king of Spain amuſed him a long while to the vaſt detriment of his own ſubjects. A daughter of France was at laſt obtained, whoſe pride and bigotry were attended with dreadful conſequences. In Scotland, James appeared ſober, chaſte, and attached to learning; but in England his luxury was exceſſive, his language obſcene, and his actions indecent. He was a profane ſwearer, and often drank to exceſs. A more daſtardly prince never filled the throne, and whilſt he reigned, the people under his government endured the ſcorn and inſults of all the neighbouring ſtates. In deriſion he was called *queen James*; but no language can expreſs contempt equal to his worthleſſneſs.

Mr. *Thomas Cartwright*, a moſt celebrated Puritan, cloſed a laborious life about the commencement of this reign, juſt before the Hampton-Court conference.

conference. Whilſt at the univerſity, he never ſlept above five hours in a night. Mary aſcending the throne, he became a lawyer's clerk, but on the acceſſion of Elizabeth, reſumed his divinity ſtudies, and grew ſo popular a preacher, that the ſexton was obliged to take down the windows of St. Mary's church, whenever he officiated. Venturing to point out defects in the eſtabliſhment, he was expelled from Cambridge, and travelled beyond ſea, but returned at the earneſt entreaty of Mr. Fox, and many other divines. Writing in defence of the Puritans, he was anſwered by Dr. Whitgift. The diſpute was long and ſharp. Cartwright affirmed, that the ſcriptures were the only ſtandards of diſcipline and government as well as doctrine. Whitgift maintained, that though the ſcriptures were a perfect rule, they contained not a ſtandard of church government, which might be varied and altered. He obtained an archbiſhopric; his opponent exile, and afterwards deprivations and tedious impriſonment. At length the earl of Leiceſter, reſpecting his uncommon worth, appointed him governor of his hoſpital in Warwick, where he died in 1603, aged ſixty-eight. In the decline of life he was ſo troubled with the ſtone and gout, by frequently lying in priſons, that he was obliged to ſtudy on his knees. A little before he expired he ſpent two hours in private prayer, and having quietly reſigned his ſpirit to God, was buried in his own hoſpital. Good Mr. *Dodd*, ſo famous for his *ſayings*, and alſo for his ſufferings, preached the funeral ſermon of this induſtrious ſcholar and patient confeſſor.

Another perſon, who well deſerves to be particularly recorded, was Mr. *John Robinſon*, uſually ſtiled the Father of the Independents. He adopted Mr. *Brown*'s leading opinions as to church government, but encouraged liberal ſentiments reſpecting thoſe

thoſe who differed, and was paſtor to one of the firſt regular congregations, which aſſerted that every particular church or ſociety of Chriſtians was complete in itſelf, and not obliged to ſubmit to the control or direction of any ſynods, convocations, or councils. Being perſecuted ſeverely in England, he removed in the year 1610, with certain families of the ſame ſentiments, to Leyden, where the magiſtrates allowed them to conduct public worſhip, as their conſciences directed. In 1620, part of the congregation determined on removing to America, and having kept a ſolemn day of faſting and prayer, to implore a bleſſing on their hazardous enterprize, Mr. Robinſon preached an excellent ſermon from *Ezra* viii. 21. *Then I proclaimed a faſt there, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourſelves before our God, to ſeek of him a right way for us and for our little ones, and for all our ſubſtance.* He concluded with the following exhortation, which highly merits being preſerved, as breathing a noble ſpirit of Chriſtian charity, then quite new to the world, and containing leſſons ſtill very neceſſary to be repeated.

" Brethren, we are now quickly to depart from " one another, and whether I may ever live to " ſee your face on earth any more, the God of " heaven only knows; but whether God has ap- " pointed that or not, I charge you before God, " and his bleſſed angels, that you follow me no " further, than you have ſeen me follow the Lord " Jeſus Chriſt. If God reveal any thing to you " by any other inſtrument of his, be as ready to " receive it, as ever you were to receive any truth " by my miniſtry; for I am verily perſuaded, I " am very confident, the Lord has more truth yet " to break forth out of his holy word. For my " part, I cannot ſufficiently bewail the condition " of the reformed churches, who are come to a

" period

" period in religion, and will go at preſent no fur-
" ther than the inſtruments of their reformation.
" The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond
" what Luther ſaw, whatever part of his will our
" good God has revealed to Calvin, they will ra-
" ther die than embrace it. And the Calviniſts
" you ſee ſtick faſt where they were left by that
" great man of God, who yet ſaw not all things.
" This is a miſery much to be lamented; for
" though they were burning and ſhining lights in
" their times, yet they penetrated not into the
" whole counſel of God; but were they now liv-
" ing would be as willing to embrace further light,
" as that which they firſt received. I beſeech you
" remember it, it is an article of your church
" covenant, ' That you be ready to receive what-
" ever truth ſhall be made known to you from the
" written word of God.' " Remember *that*, and
" every other article of your ſacred covenant:
" but I muſt herewithal exhort you to take heed
" what you receive as truth. Examine it, conſi-
" ſider it, and compare it with other ſcriptures of
" truth before you receive it; for it is not poſſible
" the Chriſtian world ſhould come ſo lately out of
" ſuch thick antichriſtian darkneſs, and that per-
" fection of knowledge ſhould break forth at once.
" I muſt alſo adviſe you to abandon and ſhake off
" the name of *Browniſts:* it is a mere nick-name,
" and a brand for the making religion, and the
" profeſſors of it, odious to the Chriſtian world."

Having ſaid this, with ſome other things relating to their private conduct, he committed them to the grace of God. After encountering various hard-ſhips, this colony ſettled at Cape Cod, from whence they ſoon removed to a place named by them New Plymouth. Mr. *Robinſon* continued at Leyden, univerſally beloved and eſteemed by all the Dutch miniſters and profeſſors, amongſt whom

he

he lived in perfect harmony until 1626, and then died aged fifty. His remains were attended to the grave with much honour, those who had never been of his communion regarding him as a public loss.

It is seriously to be lamented, that Mr. *Robinson*'s liberal ideas were not unanimously adopted. No body of men for a long time after the reformation, opposed persecution as in itself unjustifiable. The Puritans, though they were professed enemies to human authority forcing itself into the offices of religion, acknowledged at the same time, that all who taught doctrines contrary to the revealed will of God might be imprisoned, fined, banished, or deprived of life. They never censured those bishops who in the reigns of Edward VI. Elizabeth, and James I. caused Anabaptists, Arians, and Socinians to be burned alive. Mr. *Fox*, indeed, the venerable martyrologist, wrote an affecting letter to Elizabeth without success, notwithstanding her great personal esteem for him, entreating that the cruel punishment of *burning* might not be inflicted on certain persons denying the Trinity. He proposed some milder death, if they must be deprived of life, which he thought far too rigorous; not venturing to deny, whatever his real sentiments were, that imprisonment, fines, stripes, or the pillory, might be necessary severities. Other humane individuals of different communions, perhaps thought as he did, or even adopted Mr. Robinson's generous notions; their voices however were not heard.

The *Socinians* themselves, so generally disliked and harassed, having obtained considerable authority in Poland and Transylvania, became involved in the guilt of persecuting those who departed further from the ancient faith than their chief leaders approved. Heresy was an abomination to all; and that was every where deemed heresy which opposed

poſed the ſentiments of thoſe eccleſiaſtics whom the civil power moſt favoured, or who had obtained the greateſt influence amongſt their reſpective denominations.

The Puritans therefore who remained at home, or fled to America, are not chargeable with inconſiſtency on account of their ſevere treatment of the *Baptiſts*, then little known either in Old or New England, and too generally and unjuſtly confounded with the German Anabaptiſts of a former period, whom oppreſſion had rendered mad, and whoſe exceſſes were imputed long after, to ſuch as reſembled them in nothing but their perfectly harmleſs ſentiments reſpecting baptiſm. Nor were the ſtill more rigorous proceedings againſt the *Quakers*, on their firſt appearance in 1656, contrary to any principles of toleration the Puritans had ever maintained. They were unhappily miſled by the ſentiments univerſally prevalent in that age, and quite unfavourable to bearing with the propagation of any new doctrines, eſpecially ſuch as, till better explained and underſtood, appeared not only ſubverſive of Chriſtianity, but even of civil government and all ſocial order.

The *Quakers* denied, that the Holy Scriptures were the only rule of faith and manners, and profeſſed to be guided by the light within. *Simon Fiſher*, a leading perſon amongſt them, affirmed in his anſwer to Dr. Mather, "The Scriptures are not God's voice, they are in ſome things fallible and ſo not fit to be the rule; but the light of Chriſt in the heart, this is infallible, the only law, guide, and rule." They diſputed the morality of the Sabbath, maintaining that every day was equally the Lord's, and ſtrongly condemned celebrating either of the goſpel ordinances. They reviled the prieſthood of every denomination, even the moſt diligent and exemplary miniſters, as baſe

hirelings, and treated magiſtrates with ſtrange inſulting rudeneſs. Oaths, they abſolutely refuſed, and indiſcriminately oppoſed the uſe of arms, though merely taken up in ſelf-defence. Not content with propagating theſe notions by peaceable methods, they diſturbed the proceedings in courts of judicature; and entering places of worſhip, denounced God's judgments againſt the perſons aſſembled. Men and women appeared openly ſtark naked, and numbers of them in language and behaviour (rather approved than cenſured by friends, both in Old and New England) more reſembled perſons raving mad, than the profeſſors of any religion whatever.

Theſe novel opinions and ſtrange practices, rendered Quakeriſm, on its firſt appearance, exceedingly obnoxious to all other denominations of Chriſtians, and the New Englanders enacted very barbarous laws againſt the profeſſors of it, who were baniſhed the country, and death was decreed as the puniſhment of a return. And, horrible to relate! four ſuffered in conſequence of this bloody ſtatute.

In that intolerent age all the parties laboured under a general infatuation; and even the Quakers themſelves, in a period more enlightened, when eſtabliſhed in Penſylvania, violated the laws of unlimited toleration in the caſe of *George Keith*, whom they fined, impriſoned, and obliged to quit the province. Their adverſaries, as might well be expected, did not abſtain from reproaching them for a conduct, by no means juſtifiable, though leſs rigorous in degree than what they had complained of *. Suppoſing *Keith* a turbulent man, ſo were other ſectaries in the opinion of rulers, who had not learned to bear oppoſition.

* This matter is judiciouſly treated by Mr. *Neal*, in his *Hiſtory of New England*, Vol. i. ch. 7. who underſtood and loved Chriſtianity too well to defend or excuſe the leaſt degree of intolerance, but juſtly thought Deiſts, and even peaceable Atheiſts, entitled to protection and every civil right.

After

After the firſt fervors of the Quakers were moderated, *Robert Barclay* wrote his excellent *Apology*; a book which will ever be held in prime eſtimation by many, who do not admit all its arguments as unanſwerable. The admired *William Penn* alſo joined theſe people, whoſe *No Croſs, No Crown*, ranks amongſt the moſt valuable practical writings of the laſt century, and his *Great Cauſe of Liberty and Conſcience defended*, with the earlieſt and beſt productions, in behalf of that freedom, which is now generally acknowledged to be every man's birth-right. His talents as a legiſlator have ſtamped diſtinguiſhed honour on his name, which will be revered by the friends of humanity as long as time ſhall endure.

The Quakers being ſoon reduced to good order by judicious managers, and their principles better known and underſtood, the people of New England, after a few years, repented of their harſh proceedings. Every law bearing hard upon that body was repealed; they were admitted to all the rights of free citizens, and long before American independency was in contemplation, they were excuſed paying that proportion of their eſtates which, when the lands were firſt divided, was appropriated to a regular miniſtry, which is devoted to the maintenance of their ſchools.

They encounter no ſufferings or diſcouragements of any kind: as far as it is poſſible for men to teſtify a diſapprobation of errors committed by their progenitors, the deſcendants of the Puritans effectually did it long ago. American Quakers do not, like their brethren in Britain and Ireland, publiſh a yearly liſt of ſufferings, nor complain of the impriſonment of friends on account of proſecutions in ſpiritual and eccleſiaſtical courts, for conſcientiouſly refuſing to pay what, from their religious principles, they deem an unchriſtian exaction. And where they

form a majority, no party of Chriſtians can complain of the ſmalleſt oppreſſion, they being as ready to extend full liberty to all, as their anceſtors were to ſuffer for what they eſteemed genuine Chriſtianity. In this country they are generally held in high eſteem.

It ſeemed proper, and indeed ſomewhat neceſſary, to touch upon this ſubject, becauſe the behaviour of the Puritans to the Quakers, is ſo often mentioned by the enemies of religion, and the advocates for the reſtraints on toleration, as a proof that nothing but power is wanting, to lead all ſects into perſecuting meaſures, however condemned by themſelves when the ſubjects of it. *Toleration* was once an acceptable word, but implying ſome *favour* granted, is properly rejected as illiberal. All the enlightened friends of mankind, and thoſe who regard Chriſtianity purely as a divine ſyſtem, will ſteadily maintain the natural *right* of every individual to an unreſtrained, univerſal liberty of conſcience.

CHAP. III.

CHARLES I. having married a Papiſt, who had a remarkable aſcendency over him, and a bigotted attachment to her religion, no wonder that party was connived at and encouraged; nor ought other ſectariſts to have teſtified any diſpleaſure at this, had equal favour and lenity been ſhewn to them. But that all others were oppreſſed, and the Papiſts ſo greatly favoured, naturally tended to exaſperate, whilſt ſome ſtill remained alive who had ſeen the numerous fires kindled in Queen Mary's reign.

The

The king always declared himſelf a Proteſtant, yet behaved with extraordinary complaiſance towards the church of Rome. When in Spain, receiving a letter from the pope, who endeavoured to make him a convert, Charles anſwered him in a more obliging manner than ſtrict Proteſtants could well approve. He ſtyled him "Moſt Holy Father," and encouraged him to expect "that when he came to the crown; there ſhould be but one religion in his dominions, ſeeing that both Catholics and Proteſtants believe in one Jeſus Chriſt." An union between Papiſts and Proteſtants, was a favourite idea of the celebrated Grotius and others; but it could not then have been, nor can it at any time be accompliſhed, unleſs Proteſtants will approach nearer in their conformity to the church of Rome. This would be departing from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, and corrupting the pure religion of Jeſus, to obtain that poor thing a mere external agreement.

If all parties renounce whatever wears the appearance of perſecution, declare for equal liberty, and worſhip in the manner each ſhall think moſt ſcriptural and edifying, this will produce the beſt union—an union of hearts and affections. Opinions may vary not only without injury, but with advantage to mental improvement.

Charles promoted Papiſts to offices of the higheſt honour and truſt. Indeed, as that late unfortunate French revolutioniſt *Condorcet* obſerves, in his *Sketch of the Progreſs of the Human Underſtanding*, "Proteſtant monarchs of Great-Britain have conſtantly favoured Catholiciſm, that religion ſo dear to kings, whenever it has ceaſed to threaten them with a pretender to the throne." The kings of the earth are repreſented *Rev.* xviii. 9, 10. as bitterly lamenting the fall of that great city Babylon, which biſhop *Hurd*, clerk of the cloſet to

his preſent majeſty, interprets (as a majority of the learned church of England divines uſed to do) as meaning papal Rome; ſo favourable to every ſpecies of tyranny. It is one avowed deſign of the Warburtonian lecture to maintain and enforce this doctrine, that the pope is antichriſt. Several prelates and dignitaries having done this within theſe laſt thirty years, the idea, if a miſtaken one, cannot be deemed a puritanical fancy, or the new notion of any violent modern reformer. Beſides the encouragement given to Papiſts at the court of Charles I. the pope had a nuncio in England, and the queen an agent at Rome. Cardinal *Barberini* was appointed protector of the Engliſh nation, and a ſociety became erected under the title of the congregation for propagating the faith. *Richard Smith*, titular biſhop of Chalcedon, exerciſed epiſcopal juriſdiction over the Engliſh Catholics, by a commiſſion from the pope. He conferred orders and appeared in Lancaſhire with the mitre and croſier. The pope's legate converted ſeveral of the gentry, and attempted the king himſelf, by preſents of little Popiſh toys and pictures, with which his majeſty appeared no ways diſpleaſed. Sundry catholic military men were put into commiſſion, and large numbers were enliſted in the royal armies againſt the Scots. So that, as lord Clarendon writes, "The Papiſts enjoyed a great calm, being abſolved from the ſevereſt parts of the law and diſpenſed with for the gentleſt." At the coronation, Dr. *Laud*, then biſhop of St. David's (whoſe name will be frequently repeated in this chapter) officiated as dean of Weſtminſter inſtead of biſhop *Williams*, who had incurred the king's diſpleaſure, and was not permitted to aſſiſt. Laud, then a prebendary of the abbey, was advancing very faſt in favour and power, and therefore honoured with bearing a principal part in the ceremony.

mony. Beſides producing the uſual regalia, he adorned the altar with an old crucifix, and as ſoon as the archbiſhop had put the crown upon the king's head, and performed other uſual ſolemnities, when about to receive the homage of the lords, *Laud* came up to him and read the following extraordinary paſſage, not to be found in any former coronation ſervice. "Stand and hold faſt from henceforth the place to which you have been heir, by the ſucceſſion of your forefathers, being now delivered to you by the authority of Almighty God, and by the hands of us, and all the biſhops and ſervants of God. And as you ſee the clergy to come nearer to the altar than others, ſo remember that in all places convenient you give them greater honour, that the mediator of God and man may eſtabliſh you in the kingly throne, to be a mediator between the clergy and the laity, and that you may reign for ever with Jeſus Chriſt, the King of kings and Lord of lords."

Dr. *Grey* ſays, theſe words were not ſpoken by *Laud*, but by the archbiſhop. In this he differs from other hiſtorians. That Laud was zealous to an extreme in advancing clerical power is well known, and being ſoon advanced to the ſee of London, and then of Canterbury, and ſtanding in the higheſt degree of favour with his ſovereign, he became the chief manager of affairs both in church and ſtate, acting the bigot and the tyrant in each.

Auricular confeſſion, penance, altar-worſhip, ſaint-adoration, the ſubſtantial corporal preſence of Chriſt in the ſacrament and the maſs, were defended by clergymen of the eſtabliſhment. Books maintaining Popiſh doctrines were licenſed and publicly ſold, when thoſe of the moſt eminent Proteſtants, *Fox*'s Martyrology, biſhop *Jewel*'s Works, and others were ſuppreſſed. Abp. Laud, daringly

daringly preſumed to make alterations in the Common-Prayer, and impoſed thoſe alterations on the whole body of the clergy, ſtriking out ſome ſentences which diſpleaſed the Papiſts, and inſerting ſuch as bore hard upon the Puritans. Thus did an individual clergyman take upon him to change, what had been ſettled by act of parliament. The church of Rome was acknowledged a true church, but the foreign Proteſtants were not eſteemed ſuch. Our ambaſſadors employed in any parts where the reformation prevailed, uſed to frequent the congregations and hold correſpondence with the moſt eminent members. But lord *Scudamore* being ſent ambaſſador to France, was, according to Clarendon, inſtructed to hold no connection with men of the reformed perſuaſion, and ſo inſtead of going to the Proteſtant church, furniſhed his chapel after the new faſhion, with candles upon the altar and other ornaments, "taking care to publiſh on all occaſions, that the church of England, looked not on them as part of their communion, which was likewiſe induſtriouſly diſcourſed at home."

The queen of Bohemia, ſiſter to the king, from whom our preſent ſovereign is deſcended, ſolicited his majeſty in a moſt preſſing manner, to grant a public collection through England, for her late ſubjects, the poor perſecuted miniſters of the Palatinate, whom the Papiſts had baniſhed from their country on account of their religion. Charles gave a brief containing theſe words, "Whoſe caſes are the more to be deplored, becauſe this extremity is fallen upon them for their ſincerity and conſtancy in the true religion, which we together with them profeſſed; — whereas theſe religious perſons might have enjoyed their eſtates and fortunes, if with other backſliders in the time of trial, they would have ſubmitted themſelves to the antichriſtian yoke." *Laud* expunged theſe paſſages,

ſages, denying they were of the ſame religion with us, becauſe they were Calviniſts, and their miniſters had not epiſcopal ordinations; but how any perſon who reads the articles of the church of England attentively, can deny that they are Calviniſtical is amazing. He objected to calling the church of Rome an antichriſtian yoke, "Becauſe it would then follow, that ſhe was in no capacity to convey ſacerdotal powers in ordinations, and conſequently the benefit of the prieſthood, and the force of holy miniſtrations, would be loſt in the Engliſh church; for as much as ſhe has no orders, but what ſhe derives from that of Rome." Yet this church in the homilies which Laud had ſubſcribed to (as every clergyman muſt ſtill do) is termed "idolatrous and anti-chriſtian." Not only "a harlot" as the ſcripture calleth her, but alſo "a foul, filthy, withered old harlot; the fouleſt and filthieſt that ever was ſeen." Such was the conſiſtency of this eccleſiaſtical deſpot.

The collection not ſucceeding after the above expreſſions were ſtruck out, ſome Puritan divines ſigned a recommendatory letter, deſiring all friends, to enlarge their charity, "as to men of the ſame faith and profeſſion with themſelves." Laud hearing of this, cited the divines before the high-commiſſion, and put a ſtop to the collection. He gratified the Papiſts, however, who had driven Frederic, King of Bohemia, and Elector Palatine of Rhine, out of his dominions, and forced him, his queen and family, to fly to Holland in a ſtarving condition, by leaving out the princeſs and her children in the collect for the royal family, in a new edition of the Common-Prayer. The Proteſtant cauſe was ruined where it had long flouriſhed, and this illuſtrious family, one of its grand ſupports, baſely inſulted by a haughty prieſt, placed

placed at the head of the chief amongſt reformed eſtabliſhments.

After an exile of twenty-eight years, this family regained part of their dominions, and were at length declared preſumptive heirs to the crown of England, of which they took poſſeſſion on the death of Queen *Anne*, to the inexpreſſible joy of all the rational lovers of religion, liberty, and their country: particularly the whole body of Proteſtant diſſenters, whoſe forefathers were hearty friends to the anceſtors of their preſent ſovereign when plunged in the deepeſt diſtreſs. This generous attachment, free from all intereſted views, expoſed them to the vengeance of that primate ſo much the idol of the advocates for the divine right of kings, to ſupport men of like principles in every tyrannical uſurpation over their fellow creatures.

It was a very juſt obſervation of a Venetian gentleman who travelled through England at this time, "That the univerſities, biſhops, and divines of England, daily embraced Catholic doctrines, though they profeſſed them not with open mouth." They held that the church of Rome was a true church; that the pope was ſuperior to all biſhops; that to him it pertained to call general councils; that it was lawful to pray for ſouls departed, and that altars ought to be erected in all churches. In fine, they believed all that was taught by the *church* of Rome, but not by the *court* of Rome. To the authority of that court over the clergy, they did not chooſe to ſubmit themſelves; but to an authority like it, eſtabliſhed here, they wiſhed to bring into ſubjection the laity of every rank and degree. It has been mentioned as a ſaying of Laud, "That he hoped to ſee the time when no Jack-gentleman in England would be permitted to wear his hat before the meaneſt prieſt."

Whilſt

Whilſt the Papiſts were thus encouraged, the Puritans experienced very different treatment. To render the difference betwixt them and the church wider, Laud introduced ſeveral pompous innovations tending to Popery, which had no foundation in the laws of the realm, or in the canons of the church, any more than in the word of God. He conſecrated churches and chapels, with ſuch a variety of ſuperſtitious ceremonies as Rome itſelf could ſcarcely outdo. The manner of his conſecrating *St. Catherine Cree-Church*, London, has been particularly recorded. Though it had been only repaired, Laud ſuſpended all divine ſervice in it, till he had exhibited therein certain ſtrange fopperies, more like the freaks of a perſon diſordered in his mind, than acts of devotion. Being come to the door, ſome that were prepared, cried with a loud voice, *Open, open the everlaſting doors, that the king of glory may come in.* Preſently the doors were opened, when Laud with his attendants marched in, and immediately falling down upon his knees, with his eyes lifted up and his arms ſpread, uttered theſe words, "This place is holy, this ground is holy; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, I pronounce it holy." Then he threw up duſt or aſhes into the air ſeveral times, parading round the church repeating pſalms; beſtowed about twenty curſes upon all who ſhould afterwards profane that holy place, and as many bleſſings on thoſe who had any hand in the building, adorning, or giving any thing to it; and at the end of every curſe, bowing towards the eaſt, ſaid, "Let all the people ſay Amen." After a ſermon, the ſacrament was adminiſtered: in approaching the altar, he made many low bows, and coming to the ſide of it, where the bread and wine were covered, bowed ſeven times; and after reading ſeveral prayers, came near the bread, and gently

gently lifting up the cover of the napkin, dropped it when he beheld the bread, flew back a ſtep or two, bowed ſeveral times towards it, then drew near again, opened the napkin and bowed as before. Then he laid his hand on the cup, which was full of wine, with a cover upon it, which he let go, went back, and bowed thrice towards it. He then came near again, and lifting up the cover of the cup, looked into it, and ſeeing the wine, let fall the cover, retired back and bowed as before; then after receiving the ſacrament and repeating many prayers, the ceremony of conſecration was ended.

Such a mode of proceeding was eſteemed by our firſt reformers ſuperſtitious and abſurd. The ſynagogues of the Jews were not thus ſet apart, nor was Solomon's temple conſecrated by a prieſt, but by a king, with ſolemn prayers and ſacrifices according to the word, without the ſuperſtitious inventions of men. Our Saviour declares, that *Whereſoever two or three ſhould be gathered together in his name, he would be in the midſt of them*; *and that the hour was coming, when true worſhippers would worſhip the Father in ſpirit and in truth.* The New Teſtament no where teaches Chriſtians to regard one place as more holy than another, and equally groundleſs is the idea of peculiar ſanctity attached to any one order of men. All ſincere believers of every rank and degree, who endeavour to do the will of the Moſt High are, according to expreſs declarations of ſcripture, *an holy prieſthood.* Churches in modern times, are it is ſuppoſed conſecrated ſomewhat differently, the form not being preſcribed; but the conſecrator, muſt be one of the epiſcopal order. Surely, if ſuitable prayers were offered on the occaſion by the clergyman of the place, it would be equally efficacious.

Conſecrating plots of ground as receptacles for the dead, which muſt be done alſo by a right reverend,

rend, is a more ridiculous buſineſs than the Popiſh ſprinklings of holy water on the living. Ceremonies which have no foundation in ſcripture, every conſiſtent Proteſtant ought to reject, as incapable of being ſanctified by the remoteſt antiquity. Moſt aſſuredly, in due time, the words of our divine Maſter will be completely fulfilled, *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up.*

Crucifixes, images of the Virgin Mary, pictures of ſaints, and other relics of Popery, were repaired in thoſe places where, at the reformation, they had been broken down, and were ſet up anew in others. Conſecrated knives were provided to cut the ſacramental bread; caniſters for wafers, lined with cambric lace, and great numbers of lighted candles placed upon the altars on Sundays and ſaints days. The Puritans, always averſe from Popery, oppoſed theſe ſuperſtitions, and apprehending images would naturally tend, as they always had done, to image-worſhip, and were expreſsly condemned by the homily *againſt the peril of idolatry*, they preached and wrote againſt them, and in ſome places removed them; for which they were ſeverely handled by the high-commiſſion.

Henry Sherfield, Eſq. recorder of Saliſbury, was tried in the ſtar-chamber, for taking down ſome painted glaſs, out of one of the windows of St. Edmund's church in that city. This window diſplayed ſeven pictures of God the Father, in the form of an old man, in a blue and red coat, and a pouch by his ſide, creating the ſun and moon with a pair of compaſſes, working about the buſineſs of the ſix days creation, and on the ſeventh ſitting in an elbow chair, as if at reſt. So ſhameful and ſcandalous a repreſentation of the Almighty and eternal Jehovah, the inviſible God, whom no man hath ſeen or can ſee, muſt have given

cauſe of offence to every thoughtful perſon, eſpecially ſince many ſimple people paid ſuperſtitious reverence to this window.

In vain did Mr. *Sherfield* plead the injunction of Queen Elizabeth, which commanded that all pictures and monuments of idolatry, ſhould be removed out of churches, that no memory of them might remain in walls, glaſs windows, or elſewhere. In vain did he urge the profaneneſs diſplayed, and the idolatry occaſioned by this painting in particular; Laud ſaid, he did not not approve pictures of things inviſible; but he inſiſted ſtrongly that they had been taken down in contempt of the epiſcopal authority. This by no means appeared, ſince St. Edmund's church being lay-fee, was exempt from epiſcopal juriſdiction. Mr. Sherfield did not proceed before the conſent of the pariſh was obtained; and ſix juſtices of the peace were preſent, when he broke the panes with his ſtaff, to have the windows new glazed. Laud, however, propoſed that he ſhould be fined one thouſand pounds, and removed from his recorderſhip, be committed cloſe priſoner to the Fleet till he paid the fine, and then be bound to his good behaviour. To all this the court agreed, excepting that the fine was reduced to five hundred pounds.

The Rev. Mr. *Workman*, lecturer of St. Stephen's, Glouceſter, for affirming in a ſermon, that images were no ornaments to churches, and tended to idolatry according to the homily, was ſuſpended, excommunicated, obliged openly to recant, condemned in coſts of ſuit, and impriſoned. He was a divine of great piety, wiſdom, and moderation, conſidering which and his numerous family, the city of Glouceſter had given him an annuity of twenty pounds *per ann.* under their common ſeal, a little before his troubles. For this act of charity, the mayor, town-clerk, and ſeveral aldermen, were cited

cited before the high-commiſſion, put to one hundred pounds charges, and the annuity was cancelled. After this, Mr. Workman ſet up a little ſchool, of which Laud being informed, prohibited him, as he would anſwer the contrary at his peril. He then commenced the practice of phyſic, which his unrelenting enemy likewiſe abſolutely forbade; ſo that being deprived of all methods of ſubſiſtence, he fell into a melancholy diſorder and died.

Mr. *Peter Smart*, prebendary of Durham, and miniſter in that city, preached from theſe words in the Pſalms, in the Common-Prayer-Book tranſlation, *I hate all people that love ſuperſtitious vanities, but thy law do I love.* From hence he took occaſion to ſpeak againſt images, for which he was deprived, degraded, excommunicated, fined five hundred pounds, and committed to cloſe impriſonment, where he continued eleven years, till releaſed by the long parliament in 1640. The ornaments of Durham cathedral were ſo pompous, and the habits of the dignitaries ſo ſplendid, as to draw this obſervation from a Scotch gentleman, "That the whore of Babylon muſt have left Durham in a great hurry, for ſhe had left moſt of her trumpery behind her." (Q. Is it yet removed?)

Laud was no leſs watchful over the preſs than the pulpit, commanding his chaplains to expunge from all books brought to be licenſed, ſuch paſſages as diſallowed of paintings, drawings, carvings, gildings; erecting, bowing, or praying before images and pictures. Figures of God and the ſaints which had been taken away at the reformation, were by him ſet up and repaired in his chapel at Lambeth. It would be endleſs to recount every particular inſtance of cruel oppreſſion, exerciſed on ſuch as oppoſed theſe innovations. Above twenty miniſters were cenſured, fined, and deprived, for not bowing at the name of Jeſus, or for preach-

ing againſt it. This was enjoined by the eighteenth canon, but never did any one ſuffer for neglect herein till Laud was at the head of affairs. The communion-table was uſually placed in the middle of the chancel, or in any convenient part of the church, and the people received round it, or in their ſeveral places near. Now all communion-tables were ordered to be fixed under the eaſt wall of the chancel, with the ends north and ſouth in form of an altar, raiſed two or three ſteps above the floor, and encompaſſed with rails. Laud ordered his vicar-general to ſee this alteration made in all the churches and chapels of his province, to accompliſh which, it became neceſſary to take down the galleries in ſome places, and remove monuments. The latter was reſented by many conſiderable families, as an affront to the dead; and making the neceſſary alterations was ſuch an expence to the living, as ſome country pariſhes could ſcarcely bear. Yet thoſe who refuſed to pay the rates aſſeſſed for this purpoſe, were fined contrary to law.

The church-wardens of Beckington in Somerſetſhire, were excommunicated by their biſhop, for refuſing to remove the communion-table from the middle of the chancel to the eaſt end, and not pulling down the ſeats to make room for it. The table had ſtood time out of mind where it did, the ground on which it was placed was raiſed a foot, and encloſed with a decent wainſcot border, and none went within it, ſave the miniſter, and ſuch as he permitted. This plea not availing, they appealed to the arches, and at laſt to the king; but their appeal was rejected. After remaining excommunicated for a year, they were caſt into the common gaol for about two years more, and then obliged to do public penance in the pariſh church of Beckington and two others; the ſhame of which

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it is ſaid broke their hearts, one of them declaring upon his death-bed ſoon after, that the penance and ſubmiſſion, ſo directly againſt his conſcience, had ſunk his ſpirits and was one principal cauſe of his death. The making the above alteration raiſed a ferment amongſt the common people all over England. Many miniſters and church-wardens were excommunicated, fined, and obliged to do penance for neglecting theſe injunctions. Conſiderable numbers refuſed to come up to the rails and receive the ſacrament, for which divers were fined, and others excommunicated, to the amount of ſome hundreds, as the committee of the Houſe of Commons reported on the archbiſhop's trial.

The court-clergy were ſtrongly ſuſpected of an inclination towards Popery from various ſymptoms, one of which was their ſuperſtitious bowing to the altar, not only in time of divine ſervice, but alſo at going in and out of church. This was a new practice to the laity ſince the reformation, but Laud enjoined it upon them, and was himſelf oſtentatiouſly attentive to this ceremony, for when he went in and out of the chapel-royal, a line was always made for him by thoſe attending, to ſee the altar and do reverence towards it. Whether this bowing to the altar, ariſes from a belief of the real preſence of Chriſt in the ſacrament there adminiſtered, or from the pagan cuſtom of worſhipping towards the riſing ſun, it may be ſuppoſed thoſe can beſt tell who continue the practice.

That the zeal of the Puritans was not invariably well regulated, nor all miniſters ſo much on their guard in the pulpit or converſation as prudence demanded, may be readily acknowledged. They were men of like paſſions with others, and their patience was ſeverely tried. How far prudence ought to be carried in religious concerns muſt be left to every man's own conſcience. Boldneſs and

reſolution in a good cauſe, though often termed raſhneſs, may be preferable to that timidity which though denominated prudence, frequently favours too ſtrongly of worldly policy. The cauſe of truth is unſpeakably important: happy thoſe who in defending it, are *wiſe as ſerpents and harmleſs as doves*. At all times it becomes Chriſtians to act as good ſervants, and if called to it, as good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt.

Several of the biſhops in the year 1636, publiſhed their primary articles of viſitation, of which the moſt remarkable and curious were Dr. *Wren*'s, biſhop of Norwich. This book contains one hundred and thirty-nine articles, in which were eight hundred and ninety-ſeven queſtions, ſome very inſignificant, others highly ſuperſtitious, and ſeveral impoſſible to be anſwered. Part of them related to the morals of the miniſter, but the chief were concerning rites and ceremonies; ſuch as, whether the miniſter received the ſacrament kneeling, and made others do it? Whether he wore the ſurplice, uſed the croſs in baptiſm, read the book of ſports in the church? Whether the church-yard were conſecrated, the graves dug eaſt and weſt, and the bodies buried with their heads to the weſt? Whether the pariſhioners at going in and out of church, did reverence towards the chancel, kneeled at confeſſion, ſtood up at the creed, and bowed at the name of Jeſus? with divers articles of the like nature. The weight of theſe inquiries fell chiefly upon the Puritans, for within the compaſs of two years and four months, no leſs than fifty able and pious miniſters were ſuſpended, ſilenced, and otherwiſe cenſured, to the ruin of their whole families, for not obeying one or other of theſe articles. Some of them ſpent their days in ſilence, others went, as they had opportunity, beyond ſea; but none were releaſed from proſecution, without a promiſe

promiſe of conforming to the epiſcopal injunctions, *editis et edendis*, *i. e.* already publiſhed, or hereafter to be publiſhed. Hard indeed were theſe terms, for who could tell what ſuch popiſhly inclined biſhops would hereafter publiſh?

Many divines who ſcrupled a full conformity, and therefore could not be inducted into a living, only preached in the afternoon, being choſen and maintained by the people. They were warm and affectionate preachers, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by a religious obſervation of the Lord's-day, by a bold oppoſition to Popery, and the new ceremonies, and by an uncommon ſeverity of life. Vaſt numbers of people followed them, upon which Laud ſaid, they were the moſt dangerous enemies of the ſtate, becauſe by their prayers and ſermons they awakened the people's diſaffection, and therefore muſt be ſuppreſſed. Certain it is, that they had the Proteſtant intereſt nearly at heart, and contributed exceedingly to fortify their hearers againſt the return of Popery. Such conduct was then termed ſeditious, and their expreſſions were ſometimes unduly warm. Mr. *Bernard*, lecturer of St. Sepulchre's, London, prayed thus, "Lord open the eyes of the queen's majeſty, that ſhe may ſee Jeſus Chriſt, whom ſhe has pierced with her infidelity, ſuperſtition, and idolatry." Being convened before the high-commiſſion, that court treated him very mildly, for upon his ſubmiſſion he was diſmiſſed. In a ſermon which he ſome time after delivered at Cambridge, having uttered what gave offence againſt Arminianiſm and the new ceremonies, he was required to make an open recantation. This his conſcience not ſuffering him to do, he was ſuſpended, excommunicated, fined one thouſand pounds, condemned in coſts of ſuits, and committed to New-Priſon, where he lay ſeveral months, being cruelly uſed and almoſt ſtarved.

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He complained to the biſhops, in ſeveral letters, but could get no relief unleſs he would recant. Mr. Bernard offered to confeſs his ſorrow and penitence for any overſights or unbecoming expreſſions in his ſermons, but that would not be accepted, and ſo he was at length utterly ruined.

Theſe ſevere proceedings brought a great deal of buſineſs into the ſpiritual courts, one or other of the Puritan miniſters being every week ſuſpended or deprived, and their families reduced to poverty and beggary. Laud was at the head of all this miſchief, for the new biſhops being chiefly of his chooſing, adopted the ſame meaſures. *Pierſe*, biſhop of Bath and Wells, ſuppreſſed all lectures in market-towns, and elſewhere throughout his dioceſe. One miniſter was ſuſpended for preaching in the evening, though it were a funeral ſermon. Some of them uſed to explain the queſtions and anſwers in the public catechiſm, offering up a ſhort prayer before and after. The biſhop reproved them ſharply on this account, ſaying, "That was as bad as preaching:" ſeveral who continued this practice were enjoined public penance.

It furniſhed a ſtrong proof of attachment to Popery in thoſe who ſo ſtrenuouſly oppoſed a preaching miniſtry. No human endeavours tended ſo much to promote the reception of Chriſtianity at firſt as preaching, nor had ſo conſiderable a ſhare in reviving and reſtoring it from the corruptions of Popery afterwards. "To be fond of hearing "many ſermons, and of the frequent reading of "the ſcriptures" (ſaid a noted Jeſuit) "is in "truth no ſign of a good Catholic, but rather the "badge of a heretic." When men grow ignorant of the leading important truths of religion, they may be eaſily deluded by artful prieſts. The firſt reformers therefore were diligent, as all who feel

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a true zeal for the welfare of mankind will be, in promoting whatever tends to enlighten and enlarge the human underſtanding, the beſt defence againſt error. The connexion between knowledge and liberty, and one branch of knowledge and another, is extremely cloſe.

Laud and his adherents, to crown their noble deeds, and diſtreſs their opponents to the utmoſt, at length obtained a republication of the infamous book of ſports. The *Spectator*, No. 161, ſneers at "the nice Puritans," as he ſtyles them, for their diſlike to theſe ſports; but if they corrupted the public morals, an oppoſition was ſurely not being *righteous overmuch*. Complaint was made to the judges in the weſtern circuit, that ſhameful diſorders aroſe from revels and church-ales on the Lord's-day. Judge Richardſon therefore, at the deſire of the juſtices of the peace, and other gentlemen of the firſt name in Somerſetſhire, who ſigned a petition to the king, ſetting forth the evils they occaſioned, ordered them to be ſuppreſſed, and puniſhed ſome who did not comply. For this he was ſeverely reprimanded, on returning to court; and to ſupport thoſe licentious aſſemblies more effectually, *James*'s declaration was revived, and appointed to be read by the miniſter in every pariſh church. The ſeverely preſſing this declaration cauſed ſad havock amongſt the Puritans. Many poor miniſters ſtrained their conſciences to read it, and immediately after repeated the fourth commandment, ſaying the firſt was the law of man, the other of God. A long liſt however refuſed compliance, and on this account were deprived, excommunicated, and forced to leave the kingdom. *Wren*, biſhop of Norwich, ſays, that great numbers in his dioceſe had declined it and were ſuſpended; that ſome afterwards complied, but thirty perſiſting were excommunicated

cated. Suppoſing a like proportion in other dioceſes, the whole would amount to ſeven hundred and eighty. It is ſaid that only three were ſuſpended in Laud's dioceſe, who were ruined, one of them having a wife and ſeven children to provide for. How it happened that ſo few ſuffered there, cannot be aſcertained. His ſevere treatment of judge Richardſon is recorded, and Sir *N. Brent*, his vicar-general, atteſted upon oath at Laud's trial, that he gave him a ſpecial charge to convene all miniſters before him, who would not read the book of ſports on the Lord's-day, and to ſuſpend them for neglect, and that he had ſpecial orders to ſuſpend three. This Sir *N. Brent* did againſt his judgment, the king's declaration not obliging the miniſter, any more than ſome other perſon to read it, nor authorize the biſhops to inflict any puniſhment on the refuſers. The biſhops, however, took upon them to do this, and not a few were cenſured by the high-commiſſion, of which Laud was chief. A miniſter who preached twice on one of thoſe revel days, was called to account, becauſe his preaching was a hinderance to the revel.

The Dutch and French Proteſtant churches, being ten in number, and containing about five or ſix thouſand communicants, had a charter of privileges granted them by Edward VI. and confirmed five times in the reign of James, and twice in that of Charles himſelf. Laud, however, ſaid they were a neſt of ſchiſmatics, and therefore ordered that all their children of the ſecond deſcent born in England, ſhould reſort to their pariſh churches. By this proceeding their aſſemblies were diſſolved, their miniſters ſuſpended, and many of the people left the kingdom, eſpecially in the dioceſe of Norwich, from whence biſhop Wren drove away three thouſand manufacturers in wool, cloth, &c.

ſome

ſome of whom kept one hundred people at work, to the unſpeakable damage of the kingdom. The mayor and corporation of Canterbury aſſured his grace, that above one thouſand two hundred of their poor were maintained by the foreigners, and interceded with the king in their favour. But his majeſty anſwered, "We muſt believe our archbiſhop of Canterbury," who uſed their deputies very roughly, telling them it were better to have no foreign churches, than to indulge their nonconformity.

Thus will perſecuting bigots ſtarve whole families, impoveriſh towns, and ruin trade, the chief ſupport of a nation, to ſupport their uſeleſs and impracticable ſcheme of an entire uniformity of opinion and worſhip; and if they have endowed a college, or an hoſpital, be extolled as men of great public ſpirit, though poſſibly actuated by mere pride and vanity. Whereas one ſober induſtrious manufacturer, who keeps twenty poor perſons conſtantly at work, is of more real ſervice to the community, than he who lays out thouſands in endowing churches and enriching colleges.

The primate extended his iron hand to Scotland, and violently ſtrove to introduce the Engliſh liturgy and ceremonies there, to the unſpeakable diſguſt of that people, who aroſe up as one man againſt the deſign. He even attempted bringing the churches of the factors in Holland under the ſame diſcipline, but herein he was diſappointed. —This man poſſeſſed pride enough for a pope, and ſuffered the univerſities to give him ſuch titles as the pope claimed; "your holineſs; moſt holy "father; full of the Holy Ghoſt; chief prieſt; "the beſt and greateſt in the earth." Thus ſanctioned in his lofty pretences by the ſhameful, profane flattery of theſe learned bodies, he aſſumed the name of patriarch or pope of Great-Britain;

Alterius

Alterius Orbis Papa, a title which one of the popes beſtowed on a former archbiſhop of Canterbury. Hence the Romaniſts entertained ſuch an opinion of him, as twice to make him the offer of a cardinal's hat; but his anſwer was, "that ſomething dwelt within him, which would not ſuffer that, till Rome was otherwiſe than it is." He maintained an intimate correſpondence with the pope's nuncio and divers prieſts and jeſuits; conniving at the liberties they took, and threatening the officers who were diligent in apprehending them, whilſt he unremittingly haraſſed the Puritans, introduced numerous Popiſh ceremonies, licenſed Popiſh books, and ſuppreſſed Proteſtant ones.

Fond of advancing the power of the church to an exorbitant height, through his efforts Dr. *Juxon*, biſhop of London, newly raiſed from obſcurity, was appointed lord high treaſurer of England; an office placing him at the very head of civil affairs, and which no prieſt had held ſince the dark times of Popery in the reign of *Henry* VII. This enraged the nobility, and made not only the biſhops, but the inferior clergy ſo proud, that a layman (as a writer of that age expreſſed himſelf) "ſcarcely dared to approach the tails of their mules." It is no wonder that haughty eccleſiaſtics ſhould have extolled this prelate to the ſkies; but that ſo many ſhould be found to reverence his memory amongſt the nobility and gentry, whom he would have forced to bow ſubmiſſively to prieſtly uſurpation, is truly aſtoniſhing. May the time come when miniſters will receive no greater honours, than the faithful diſcharge of their duty merits from the community; then the worthy will obtain all the reſpect they deſire, and the worthleſs as much as they deſerve.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

VARIOUS books were written againſt the ruling party. Dr. *Leighton*, a man of conſiderable learning and abilities, had printed in Holland, *An Appeal to Parliament*, or *Zion's Plea againſt Prelacy*; not intending to diſperſe it in England, but to provide copies for the uſe of parliament only. This important circumſtance (which Dr. *Toulmin* ſets forth in his late edition of Mr. *Neal's Hiſtory*, Vol. ii. p. 209.) has been too generally unnoticed. In this appeal the biſhops are ſtyled men of blood; ceremonies vehemently declaimed againſt, and the queen named a daughter of Heth, by which was only meant a Papiſt. But if his language, formed after the taſte and ſpirit of that age, was rude and indecent; and his expreſſions, though founded in truth, too warm to be juſtified, bad as the practices were againſt whom he directed them; yet the ſentence pronounced for writing, what he did not actually publiſh, cannot be read without horror. "He was to be committed to the Fleet-Priſon; to pay a fine of ten thouſand pounds; to be degraded from his miniſtry; to be brought to the pillory at Weſtminſter and whipt; after whipping, to be ſet upon the pillory a convenient time, and have one of his ears cut off, one ſide of his noſe ſlit, and be branded in the face with S. S. for ſewer of ſedition: then to be carried back to priſon, and after a few days to be pilloried a ſecond time in Cheapſide, and be there likewiſe whipt, branded, and have the other ſide of his noſe ſlit, his other ear cut off, and then to be ſhut up in cloſe priſon for the remainder of his life."

Between paſſing the ſentence and execution, the doctor made his eſcape, but being retaken in Bed-

fordſhire, he was brought back to priſon. On Friday, Nov. 6, 1630, part of the ſentence was executed upon him, "after this manner," ſays biſhop *Laud* in his Diary; and had not he particularly recorded it, the account now would hardly obtain credit. "1. He was ſeverely whipt before he was put in the pillory. 2. Being ſet in the pillory, he had one of his ears cut off. 3. One ſide of his noſe ſlit. 4. Branded on the cheek with a red hot iron with the letters S. S. On that day ſeven-night, his ſores upon his back, ear, noſe, and face, being not yet cured, he was whipt again at the pillory in Cheapſide, and had the remainder of his ſentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other ear, ſlitting the other ſide of his noſe, and branding the other cheek."

The perſon on whom theſe ſhocking indignities and barbarous cruelties were exerciſed was between forty and fifty years of age, a huſband, and a father. The whipping was inflicted with a triple cord; every ſtroke (of which he received each time thirty-ſix) bringing away the fleſh, and he affirmed, ten years afterwards, that he ſhould feel it to his dying-day. The time deemed *convenient* for him to ſtand in the pillory was nearly two hours, in froſt and ſnow; nor was he permitted to return from Weſtminſter to the Fleet in a coach provided for him, but compelled in that ſad condition and ſevere ſeaſon to go by water. His priſon room for many weeks was a loathſome, ruinous hole, full of rats and mice, where the ſnow and rain beat in upon him; nobody was ſuffered to come near him, not even his wife for ſome time, nor was he allowed a bit of bread or a drop of water, but what was paid for; and once without any offence given, eight ſtrong fellows were ſet upon him, who tore his clothes and bruiſed his body, ſo that he was never well afterwards; and having

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continued closely confined for ten years in the common gaol, when released by parliamentary interposition, he could hardly walk, hear, or see.

When the petition recounting his sufferings was read, the house burst into tears, and the clerk was ordered once and again to stop, till they had given some vent to their compassion and composed their minds. But much as this assembly of laymen felt at the recital, *Laud*, the archbishop, when the merciless sentence was pronounced, pulled off his cap and gave thanks for it, though the miserable object at that very time was in the height of a sickness occasioned, as four physicians attested, by poison, which brought off his hair and skin. Truly did lord Clarendon observe of this prelate, "That he was resolved the discipline of the church should be felt, as well as spoken of."

A knight of the high-commission intimated to one of the lords, that this terrible sentence might open a way for the prelates to inflict such disgraceful punishments and tortures upon men of quality. That lord replied, it was only *in terrorem*, and that he would not have any one think it was ever intended to be executed. The peer was mistaken, and the knight's apprehension well grounded.

The cruel punishments inflicted on Mr. *Burton* a clergyman, Dr. *Bastwick* a physician, and Mr. *Prynne* a lawyer, (who for writing against stage-plays, divine superiority of bishops, and superstitious innovations, were pilloried, fined, lost their ears, and suffered imprisonment in distant parts of the kingdom remote from all their friends) cannot be set forth at large. Mr. *Prynne*'s ears had been cut off in 1633, and in 1637, being still in prison for a book written against the hierarchy, though expressed in moderate and cautious terms, it was ordered that the remainder of his stumps should be cut off, and that he should be branded on both

cheeks with the letters S. L. The hangman, as ſavage as his employers, rather ſawed than cut off the remainder of this unfortunate perſon's ears. So implacable were their perſecutors, that becauſe ſome ſhewed compaſſion for their diſtreſs on their journies to the caſtles of Launceſton, Lancaſter, and Carnarvon, they were removed to the iſlands of Scilly, Guernſey, and Jerſey. Here they remained ſeveral years, whilſt their enemies bore rule, without the uſe of pen, ink, or paper; nor could a ſingle friend, not even their wives, obtain acceſs to them. The indignity and ſeverity exerciſed on theſe men of the three learned profeſſions, gave general offence, whilſt at this very ſame time Mr. *Chowney*, a fierce Papiſt, wrote zealouſly in defence of the church of Rome; not only without being puniſhed or even queſtioned for his performance, but was permitted to dedicate his work to Laud, who favoured it with his patronage.

Mr. *Cotton*, miniſter of Boſton in Lincolnſhire, for omitting certain ceremonies, was informed againſt in the high-commiſſion, where biſhop Williams his dioceſan could not protect him. Mr. *Cotton* applied to the earl of Dorſet for his intereſt with Laud, but the earl anſwered, "If you had "been guilty of drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, or any "ſuch leſſer fault, I could have got your pardon; but "the ſin of puritaniſm and nonconformity is un-"pardonable, and therefore you muſt fly for "your ſafety." Upon this he travelled to London in diſguiſe, and ſailed for New England, where he ſpent the remainder of his days. Numerous were the miniſters, ſubſtantial gentlemen, and induſtrious perſons of different employments, whom the oppreſſions of government drove to America, notwithſtanding the prohibition of the council. In 1638, eight ſhips filled with Puritan families were ready to ſail at once from the Thames, amongſt whom

whom was that illuſtrious patriot *John Hampden* and the renowned *Oliver Cromwell.* An order was iſſued to ſtop theſe ſhips and put on ſhore all the proviſions intended for the voyage.

It was mortifying to thoſe who ſeeing no end of oppreſſion in their native country, were thus by violence prevented from going peaceably abroad; but in the end their oppreſſors had moſt cauſe for ſorrow. *Hampden* became the joyful witneſs of the beginning of a ſucceſsful oppoſition to that ſet of tyrants, and died glorioufly fighting for liberty. *Cromwell* was the diſtinguiſhed inſtrument of taking a ſevere revenge not only on the chief agents of deſpotiſm, but on the royal deſpot himſelf. May all the oppreſſors of mankind, be diſappointed in their contrivances and work their own deſtruction, rather than that of the firm conſiſtent friends to freedom.

Being thus hindered from emigrating to America, ſeveral divines, gentlemen, and rich merchants, removed to Holland. The ſtates received them with laudable humanity, granting them the uſe of public churches, at different hours of the day, to ſave them the expence of building, and the liberty of ringing a bell to ſummon their congregations to worſhip: though they did not approve the Dutch diſcipline, or join in communion with their churches, they could pray for their peace and proſperity moſt heartily.

Laud's tyranny and ſuperſtition not only ſubdued in his breaſt, every ſentiment of humanity, but the feelings of gratitude likewiſe. Dr. *Williams*, biſhop of Lincoln, appointed lord-keeper of the ſeals in the former reign, on account of his deep and extenſive legal knowledge, had laboured hard with king James, who much diſliked the man, to obtain the ſee of St. David's for Laud, and patronized him ſo zealouſly, that he ſaid, "his life would be

too ſhort to requite his lordſhip's goodneſs." Williams being an advocate for more prudent and moderate courſes than ſuited Charles I. ſoon loſt his favour, and Laud, now exalted to power, haraſſed this friend who firſt helped to raiſe him, with a malignity diſgraceful to human nature. He was for years in a ſtate of exile from court, and at length upon charges of the moſt falſe and frivolous kind, managed by perſons of infamous characters, through Laud's procurement, the biſhop of Lincoln was ſentenced to pay a fine of 10,000l. and to be impriſoned during the king's pleaſure. The man whom he had effectually patronized, even baſely endeavoured to procure his degradation, with the view of inflicting corporal puniſhment. Corporal puniſhment on a divine advanced in years, of reſpectable deſcent, ſo long a biſhop of the largeſt dioceſe in the kingdom, who had acted with eminent ability in the moſt dignified office of the law, and to whom he owed ſuch obligations! Afterwards on pretence of having received letters reflecting on Laud, he was fined 8000l. more; and Mr. Oſbaldiſton, maſter of Weſtminſter-School, who had written theſe letters, containing the words "vermin, little urchin, and meddling Hocus Pocus," (ſaid to mean Laud, but abſolutely denied by the defendant's council, who named the perſons meant in the letter) was condemned to pay a fine of 5000l. and to have his ears nailed to the pillory before his own ſchool. He ſaved himſelf by flight from this deteſtable inſult, but the biſhop was confined in the Tower three years and a half, and then with difficulty releaſed through parliamentary interpoſition, though the king ſtanding at laſt in great need of his ſervices, made him archbiſhop of York. This prelate was of a high, noble, generous ſpirit, and though too much tinctured with ſecular ambition, more of a courtier than became a miniſter of Jeſus,

Jeſus, and poſſeſſed of courage ſufficient for a general, which he diſplayed in the civil wars when advancing towards ſeventy; yet he appeared to feel a ſtrong ſenſe of the importance of real religion. To a divine once coming for inſtitution to a living, he expreſſed himſelf thus: "I have paſſed through many places of honour and truſt, both in church and ſtate, more than any of my order in England theſe ſeventy years before. But were I only aſſured, that by my preaching I had converted but one ſoul unto God, I ſhould take therein more ſpiritual joy and comfort, than in all the honours and offices which have been beſtowed upon me."

Biſhop *Warburton* thus expreſſes himſelf on the above proceedings. "This proſecution muſt needs "give every one a bad idea of Laud's heart and tem-"per. You might reſolve his high acts of power "in the ſtate into reverence and gratitude to his "maſter; his tyranny in the church, to his zeal "for and love of what he called religion; but the "outrageous proſecution of theſe two men can be "reſolved into nothing but envy and revenge: and "actions like theſe they were which occaſioned "all that bitter, but indeed juſt exclamation, "againſt the biſhops in the ſpeeches of lord Falk-"land and Digby."

One ſufferer more muſt not paſs unnoticed, if he can be called a ſufferer, whoſe high ſpirit and undaunted courage never forſook him, but appeared equally to animate his ſoul when in a ſituation to human feelings the moſt mortifying, torn and bleeding by the laſh of the hangman, or when valiantly fighting amongſt the valiant, in what he believed to be the nobleſt cauſe which could call forth the exertions of a rational being.

John Lilburne was deſcended from an ancient and reputable family. His father poſſeſſed a handſome eſtate, but being a younger ſon he was apprenticed

prenticed to a clothier in London. All his hours of leiſure he ſpent in reading the Bible, the Book of Martyrs, and the valuable works of the moſt eminent reformed divines. On account of an intimacy contracted with Dr. *Baſtwick*, he was forced upon retiring to Holland, where he got books printed againſt the prelates and their tyranny, and on his return to England was very active in vending them. It was not long before he was ſeized, when the council-board and high-commiſſion referred the buſineſs to the court of ſtar-chamber. In his examinations there he repeatedly refuſed, with the utmoſt firmneſs, to take the oath *ex officio* to anſwer interrogatories, as inconſiſtent with the liberties of a free-born Engliſhman. By his noble behaviour on this occaſion he acquired the honourable appellation of *Free-born John*. Perſiſting in refuſing the oath, the following ſentence was paſſed upon him for a contempt of the court, on the 13th of *Feb.* 1637-8: "That he ſhould be committed to the Fleet-Priſon till the 18th of *April*, when he ſhould be whipped at the cart's tail from thence to Old Palace-Yard, Weſtminſter, and then ſet upon the pillory there for two hours; after which to be carried back to the Fleet, there to remain till he conformed to the rules of the court, and alſo to pay a fine of 500l. to the king, and give ſecurity for his good behaviour."

This courageous youth, now hardly twenty, received in the whipping above five hundred laſhes with knotted cords, yet in the execution thereof he uttered many bold ſpeeches againſt the tyranny of the biſhops, and continued to do ſo when in the pillory; and after the ſtar-chamber then ſitting ordered him to be gagged, he ſtamped with his feet. Provoked at this, the court ordered him to be laid alone, with irons upon his hands and legs, in a ward, where the baſeſt and meaneſt priſoners lay.

lay. Here loaded moſt heavily, he contrived to write and publiſh *The Chriſtian Man's Trial*, and ſeveral other pamphlets, againſt his oppreſſors. The Houſe of Commons ſummoned in 1640, voted "That the ſentence of the ſtar-chamber againſt Mr. *Lilburne* was illegal, barbarous, bloody, and tyrannical. That reparations ought to be given him for his impriſonment, ſufferings, and loſſes, and that the committee ſhall prepare this caſe of Mr. *Lilburne*, to be tranſmitted to the lords, with thoſe of *Baſtwick*, *Burton*, *Leighton*, and *Prynne*." The confuſion of the times prevented their receiving the intended compenſation, and indeed for their loſs of health, corporal pain, and the ſavage maiming and diſfiguring their perſons, none could poſſibly be made. *John Lilburne* was as active in oppoſing tyrannical meaſures under the uſurpation of *Cromwell*, as he had been during the reign of *Charles*. He never feared what man could do unto him, but ſaid in the language of a truly Chriſtian hero, "I have with long deliberation committed my wife and children to the care and protection of an all-merciful GOD, whom for about theſe ten years, I have feelingly and ſenſibly known, for my *God* in Jeſus Chriſt, who with a mighty protection and preſervation hath been with me in ſix troubles and in ſeven; and from the day of my public conteſts with the biſhops, hath enabled me to carry my life in my hands, and to have it always in readineſs to lay it down in a quarter of an hour's warning, knowing that he has in ſtore for me a manſion of eternal glory." Such ſentiments as theſe diſplayed throughout every action of life exalt the human character to its true dignity, and qualify the poſſeſſor for the ſociety of the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, to which a well-grounded hope may be entertained that this upright man was joined, when the God whom he deſired faithfully

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to ſerve in his generation, called him hence in 1657, in the 39th year of his age.

The attempt to impoſe a book of canons and a liturgy upon the *Scots*, by virtue of the royal ſupremacy, met with the moſt violent oppoſition, and would not have been urged by any prelate leſs raſh and violent than Laud, whoſe meaſures all tended to alienate the hearts of his follow-ſubjects from their king. But a furious zeal ſeems to have deprived him of his underſtanding, and rendered him totally blind to the fatal and yet natural conſequences of his arbitrary proceedings. Trifling circumſtances often ſerve to diſplay the real characters of men, and nothing could more effectually evince the littleneſs of Laud's mind than his condeſcending to revenge himſelf upon *Archy*, the king's jeſter, who aſked him upon his coming to court, when the news arrived from Scotland of the violent commotions there excited, "*Whea's feuele now?* Does not your grace hear the news from Striveling about the liturgy?" Archy had made more free with his royal maſter James, and put his cap on a certain occaſion on that king's head; it being a privilege of his office to ſpare no one. Laud, however, ſo reſented this cloſe jeſt, that he prevailed on the council to make an order, which to their diſgrace as well as his, remains on record, that "Archibald Armſtrong, the king's fool, ſhould have his coat pulled over his ears, be diſcharged the king's ſervice, and baniſhed the court." This right reverend father poſſibly owed him a grudge, for being once preſent at the royal dinner hour, Archy deſired to ſay grace, and obtaining leave, ſaid, "Great praiſe be given to God, and little *Laud* to the devil."

The illegal actions of this reign, which were merely of a civil nature, though flagrant breaches on every valuable and conſtitutional right of Britons,

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are not here to be ſet forth at large. *Charles* ſummoned a parliament, ſoon after his acceſſion, which refuſing to grant what he deſired till redreſs was obtained for ſome national grievances, he quickly diſſolved; and that thoſe who had been active in their duty might not be elected in the next, he cauſed them to be appointed ſheriffs. His ſecond parliament was diſſolved without paſſing a ſingle act, becauſe they impeached his inſolent favourite the duke of Buckingham, and remonſtrated againſt levying money by the royal prerogative. Some members, as well as other perſons, for their oppoſition made to this tyranny were in a moſt arbitrary and illegal manner fined and impriſoned for ſeveral years. From this time, 1628, Charles called no parliament for upwards of eleven years, and during that whole period, his government was little better than one continued violation of the deareſt rights of the people. Taxes were levied by the royal authority only; above thirty knights, and great numbers of gentlemen, were taken out of their houſes and impriſoned at a remote diſtance, for refuſing to ſubmit to an illegal loan; that is, to lend the king what money his council was pleaſed to aſſeſs. Such of lower degree, as refuſed compliance were preſſed, or had ſoldiers quartered upon them, ſadly diſturbing the peace of families, and committing frequent robberies, rapes, and murders; ſo that travelling or even going to market became alarmingly dangerous. Had not ſome bravely riſked their perſons and properties in oppoſing tyranny, Britain might now poſſibly have been as much enſlaved, as Spain, Ruſſia, or Turkey.

The Supreme Governor of the univerſe has certainly permitted tyranny and ſuperſtition to eſtabliſh their dominion very widely; yet, could we trace back the hiſtory of every ſtate and nation, we ſhould poſſibly find, what is indiſputably true with reſpect

reſpect to ſome, that the follies and vices of the people, laid the original foundation for the deſpotiſm of their rulers. But that Almighty and Gracious Being, who brought his people Iſrael out of the land of Egypt, and out of the houſe of bondage, has, through every ſucceeding age of the world, raiſed up ſome brave and ſpirited advocates, for the liberties of their fellow-creatures, whom no dangers or difficulties could daunt. The precious ſpark when almoſt expiring, has frequently of a ſudden been blown into a flame, conſuming thoſe who would gladly have accompliſhed its utter extinction.

Charles was obliged to call a parliament in 1640. Never were ſo many great and worthy patriots returned at once; men of gravity, wiſdom, and plentiful fortunes. As to religion they were all members of the eſtabliſhment, and ordered that none ſhould ſit in that houſe, who would not receive the communion according to the uſage of the church of England. Biſhop *Hoadley*, in his anſwer to the dean of *Chicheſter*, p. 150. affirms, "The remonſtrances againſt the crown and the mitre both, and the civil war itſelf, were begun and carried on by Churchmen; by conſtant Churchmen; by a parliament full of Churchmen." They were almoſt to a man for epiſcopal government; yet they fell heavily on the biſhops, and treated them with ſuch ſeverity as the bittereſt enemies to the order could not have exceeded. The ſpeeches of thoſe eminent royaliſts, the lords *Falkland* and *Digby*, were diſtinguiſhed by their acrimony, if that term be proper, when what ſounds like violent invective was ſupported by notorious facts.

Lord *Falkland* thus began: "Mr. Speaker,—He is a great ſtranger in our Iſrael, who knows not that this kingdom has long laboured under many and great oppreſſions, both in religion and liberty, and

and that a principal cauſe of both has been ſome biſhops and their adherents; who, under pretence of uniformity, have brought in ſuperſtition and ſcandal under the title of decency; who have defiled our churches by adorning them, and ſlackened the ſtrictneſs of that union that was between us and thoſe of our religion beyond ſea; an action both unpolitic and ungodly. They have been leſs eager on thoſe who damn our church, than on thoſe who, on weak conſcience and perhaps as weak reaſon, only abſtain from it. Nay, it has been more dangerous for men to go to a neighbouring pariſh when they had no ſermon in their own, than to be obſtinate and perpetual recuſants. While maſs has been ſaid in ſecurity, a conventicle has been a crime, and which is yet more, the conforming to ceremonies has been more exacted than the conforming to Chriſtianity; and while men for ſcruples have been undone, for attempts of ſodomy they have been only admoniſhed."

Lord *Digby* delared, "No people had been ſo inſulted as the people of England had lately been, by the inſolencies of the prelates. Their vengeance has been ſo laid, as if it were meant no generation, no degree, no complexion of mankind ſhould eſcape it. Was there a man of tender conſcience? him they loaded with unneceſſary impoſitions. Was there a man of a legal conſcience? him they nettled with innovations, and freſh introductions to Popery. Was there a man of a humble ſpirit? him they trampled to dirt in their pride. Was there a man of proud ſpirit? him they bereft of reaſon, with indignation at their ſuperlative inſolence. Was there a man faithfully attached to the rights of the crown? how has he been galled by their new oath! Was there a man that durſt mutter againſt their inſolencies? he may inquire for his ears.—For my part I am ſo inflamed with

theſe things, that I am ready to cry with the loudeſt of the fifteen thouſand, *Down with them to the ground.*"

Surely, the biſhops collectively (for a few individuals claim exemption) muſt have acted ſhamefully ill, when the firm friends of epiſcopacy, who moſt judiciouſly diſtinguiſhed between the utility of the order, and the conduct of thoſe who compoſed it, expreſſed themſelves thus indignantly. The common people were ſo incenſed, that a ſpiritual lord could not publicly appear without danger of perſonal abuſe. The firmneſs they had diſplayed againſt all relaxations or abatements in favour of the Puritans, together with their ſteady oppoſition to any alterations in the church, put the commons upon ſeveral ſchemes to divide them. At length they drew up an impeachment againſt one half of the bench, for making and publiſhing ſome canons, contrary to the fundamental laws of the realm, the king's prerogative, the rights of parliament, and the property and liberty of the ſubject. The commons hoped, they would have quitted their votes in parliament to be diſcharged of the penalties incurred. This however they determined not to do; but being hated by the people, and neglected by the temporal lords, they became little better than ciphers, and ſoon after were voted out of the Houſe of Peers by a very great majority, *Feb.* 6th, 1641-2, at which the citizens of London expreſſed their ſatisfaction by ringing of bells and bonfires.

Thus the peerage of the biſhops, and the whole ſecular power of the clergy, ceaſed for about twenty years. An event which their ambition, tyranny, and contempt of the laity; their ſilencing and proſecuting ſo many excellent men, their ill advice and ready concurrence in every meaſure which tended to deſtroy the liberty of the ſubject, with their prevailing inclination to Popery, and not a diſlike

diſlike to the order itſelf, accompliſhed. The Preſbyterian diſcipline was afterwards introduced, which in all probability might never have obtained footing, had not the parliament, to defend their liberties, been obliged to call the Scots to their aſſiſtance, who would not heartily concur without getting their own form eſtabliſhed. The hierarchy was therefore deſtroyed, the very names of archbiſhops and biſhops aboliſhed, and their revenues alienated for the payment of the public debts, allowing to ſome of them an annuity. This, on account of the public confuſion, was but ill paid; and from the ſame cauſe, thoſe who had ſuffered from oppreſſion did not receive the compenſation deſigned. Complaints were made to the houſe againſt ſeveral biſhops and clergymen, but the members wanted ſufficient leiſure for attending to theſe proſecutions. Archbiſhop *Laud* was impriſoned three years in the Tower, upon an impeachment of high treaſon. Without once petitioning for a trial, or putting in an anſwer to the articles alleged againſt him, he was at length brought before the Houſe of Lords. He diſplayed conſiderable abilities and wonderful preſence of mind in his defence, but more than enough was fully proved to convict him of high crimes and miſdemeanors, and the king's pardon which he produced, being judged informal, he was ſentenced to ſuffer as a traitor. He who had moſt unfeelingly concurred in ſuch ignominous and inhuman treatment of others, ſome better born and equally well educated with himſelf, petitioned that his puniſhment might be altered from hanging to beheading, as a more honourable death, and this requeſt he obtained. The execution took place, *Jan.* 10, 1644. His life however ſhould have been ſpared; for mercy rather than juſt ſeverity, ought to actuate erring mortals.

A party canonized him, without the leaſt propriety, as a bleſſed martyr for the church of England. It was not his ſupporting the doctrine, diſcipline, and worſhip eſtabliſhed by law, but his introducing ceremonies, changes, and innovations, without or contrary to law, and preſſing them with remorſeleſs ſeverity on the clergy; it was not his attachment to the conſtitutional prerogatives of royalty, but his attempts to raiſe the king above all law, and to ſubject the liberties, property, and perſons of every individual to arbitrary will, which brought him to the block. It was not "Fatal learning," as Dr. *Johnſon* moſt erroneouſly aſſerts: for there were amongſt his proſecutors as great friends to learning as himſelf, and men who purſued their ſtudies with equal diligence. His Diary fully proves that whatever learning (that is, knowledge of *languages*) he poſſeſſed, he was weak and ſuperſtitious to a moſt contemptible and wretched degree, and ſtrangely deficient in that valuable Chriſtian endowment, humility. Biſhop *Burnet* ſays, "That which gave me the ſtrongeſt prejudices againſt him was, that in his Diary, after "he had ſeen the ill effects of his violent counſels, "and had been ſo long ſhut up, and ſo long at "leiſure to reflect on what had paſſed in the hurry "of paſſion, in the exaltation of his proſperity, "he does not in any one part of that great work "acknowledge his own errors, nor mix any wiſe "or ſerious reflections on the ill uſage he met "with, or the unhappy ſteps he had made." His writing a learned book againſt Popery, and converting ſome, as he alleged, from it, will hardly acquit him from the charge of being popiſhly inclined. A man may believe tranſubſtantiation, purgatory, the efficacy of holy water, pilgrimages, &c. &c. and yet be an uſeful member of ſociety, and fully entitled to every civil as well as religious privilege.

privilege. The eſſence of Popery conſiſteth in uſurping a power over the conſcience, and perſecuting men by fire, or what certain divines have termed wholeſome ſeverities, or depriving them of any of their natural rights for differences in opinion. This worſt part of Popery Laud and his party zealouſly eſpouſed; and it is probable he only oppoſed the pope of *Rome*, that he himſelf might be a pope at *Lambeth*. This may account for the diſlike ſome Papiſts expreſſed towards him. Had he ſucceeded in his attempts, Britain ſo far from riſing in glory and proſperity, might have become as miſerable and deſolate as the dominions of the holy father.

If the character of this prelate, which many profeſs to regard with the profoundeſt reverence, ſhould be thought here too ſeverely treated, it is to be wiſhed ſome who honour his memory would inform the world—What actions of his life can merit the applauſe of a true friend to the Britiſh conſtitution, or to the church, as it was reformed by the ſupreme authority of the realm; of a ſincere lover of the pure goſpel, of an advocate for any degree of freedom of inquiry, or a well-wiſher to the peace, comfort and happineſs of his fellow-creatures. Miſtakes and errors may be forgiven, where the amiable predominates. Who can read the lives of Warham, Fiſher, and Moore, inimical as they were to the reformation, and unhappily ſtained with the guilt of perſecution, and not pity their defects and love their memories? But *Laud* was a thorough compound of pride, paſſion, and revenge; and ſaving his learning, which hath been extolled above meaſure, he diſplayed no qualifications which can juſtly recommend a goſpel miniſter or conſtitute a valuable member of ſociety.

The breaches made in the conſtitution were not likely to be repaired, ſince Charles would yield

nothing without force, and even came in perſon, attended by an armed troop, to take five members out of the houſe, who appeared moſt ſtrenuous in oppoſing his meaſures. This was an unparalleled act of violence, and tended to deſtroy the very exiſtence of parliaments, ſince the ſame rule by which he could lay hold on five, would have furniſhed a plea for ſeizing any number whatever.

A civil war enſued. The parliament army maintained an appearance of decency and religion; and when complaints of ravages were occaſionally preſented, the offenders were puniſhed and diſorders checked. On the other ſide, ſeveral of the king's generals were debauched, cruel, and ſuperlatively wicked, and the ſoldiers infamous for execrable oaths, and all kinds of impiety. This Charles's friends did not deny, and his honour would have been promoted by removing ſuch officers as were notorious for their crimes, which might have tended to reform the ſoldiers. Parties of royaliſts, as lord *Clarendon* acknowledges, "committed ſuch horrid outrages, that people who were well devoted to the king, wiſhed for the acceſſion of any forces to redeem them." Many joined the parliament becauſe their ſoldiers appeared ſober, whilſt the king's were drunk, and prayed while the others ſwore.

Juſt about the commencement of the civil war in 1641, the Papiſts of Ireland maſſacred, with circumſtances of incredible barbarity, two hundred thouſand Proteſtants. Some indeed reckon the number much higher, and others reduce it to forty thouſand. That the havock and deſtruction were terrible, was never diſputed; and it ought alſo to be remembered might never have happened, had the reformed party been duly tolerant. Whether the king was any way implicated in this horrid affair, perſons will probably continue to form different

ferent opinions. It is ſomewhat remarkable that he would never ſtyle theſe inſurgents *rebels*, though he freely beſtowed that name upon the parliament who were defending their deareſt rights. Moreover, it was but a few days after he moſt ſolemnly declared never to connive at Popery, and wiſhed the ſacrament he was taking might be his damnation if his heart did not join with his lips. It was but a few days after this, that he agreed to a ceſſation of arms with the Iriſh Papiſts for a year, and granted them a toleration of their religion. The granting a toleration, or rather paſſing an act with the concurrence of parliament, declaring their full right to it, would have been an honourable proceeding; but all prevarication is mean, and who could truſt that perſon who almoſt inſtantaneouſly violated ſo ſolemn an engagement? He allowed the Iriſh Catholics to take legal poſſeſſion of the eſtates they had conquered from the murdered Proteſtants, ordered the duke of *Ormond* to draw off his forces from thence, and hundreds of them who had engaged in the bloody maſſacre joined themſelves to the king's army, which alienated the regards of ſeveral of his friends who had the Proteſtant intereſt at heart. However innocent Charles might be in the commencement of this unhappy buſineſs, he afterwards ſhewed himſelf too favourable to the perpretrators of the moſt horrid deeds; and that in the years 1645 and 6, he authorized the earl of *Glamorgan* to bring over a body of theſe Iriſh inſurgents to ſubdue his opponents in England, is proved beyond diſpute, and plainly evidenced that an attachment to his prerogative got the better of his humanity. Humanity indeed is never to be expected in mere politicians, but in thoſe who make a profeſſion of religion it ſhould reign ſuperior to every other conſideration, even of perſonal ſafety.

After

After an obſtinate conteſt, attended with various ſucceſs, the loſs of many thouſands on both ſides, and the unſpeakable diſtreſs of the country at large, expoſed to all the miſeries of war, the king was entirely ſubdued. When he had been for a while a priſoner, certain leading officers his opponents, by violently preventing the Houſe of Commons from aſſembling, and ſeizing or denying entrance to ſuch members as approved conciliating meaſures, got him into their own power. Having effected this, and conſtituted what they called, a *High Court of Juſtice*, his majeſty was brought to their bar. He diſowned the juriſdiction of the ſelf-created tribunal, and with great reaſon and juſtice, demanded to be heard by the lords and commons. The court however would not ſuffer its authority to be diſputed, and the preſident *Bradſhaw* pronounced ſentence of death againſt the king as a traitor, which was executed Tueſday, *Jan.* 30, 1648, by beheading.

Charles was chaſte, temperate, grave, learned, and punctual in attending religious ſervices; but his bigotry was exceſſive, bordering on cruelty; he gave proofs of his hard-heartedneſs to the ſufferings of his ſubjects, and on his honour, word, and moſt ſolemn promiſes no dependance could be placed.

It is to be wiſhed his admirers had ſaid leſs about this prince's religion, unleſs it had been acknowledged at the ſame time, that they only meant a ſcrupulous and exact attention to certain outward forms. True religion, or as it is ſtyled in Holy Writ, *The wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated: full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocriſy.* Had Charles, who poſſeſſed good mental abilities, cultivated this kind of religion, his life might have been happy, his death honourable, and his memory univerſally revered. Sceptics

are

are apt to ſneer at all religion when princes, or perſons deſtitute of good faith and regardleſs of the rights of humanity, are applauded for their piety. Some perhaps will call to mind *Muley Iſhmael*, emperor of Morocco, who died after a long reign in 1714. It is ſuppoſed that he had killed forty thouſand of his people with his own arm, chiefly by way of amuſement; yet he was a zealous religioniſt of the Mahometan claſs; rigidly exact in faſting, and ſo frequent in his prayers, that to furniſh conſtant opportunities of kneeling for occaſional exerciſes of devotion, he got fixed in all the ſpacious courts of his palace, large conſecrated ſtones pointing towards the Eaſt.

After the reſtoration, a form of prayer with faſting was appointed to be uſed on the 30th of *January*, in which Charles is ſtyled a *martyr*, a title which he firſt gave to himſelf; but he was a martyr to his own arbitrary conduct, and not for maintaining religion, liberty, or virtue. The ſcriptures which denominate the kings of Iſrael the *Lord's anointed*, are miſerably perverted at this and at all times, when applied to princes who receive their crowns from the people, or the eſtabliſhed rules of their country, without any pretenſions to a ſpecial appointment of God. But the moſt elevated language of human applauſe has been deemed inſufficient by certain high-church divines, to ſet forth the praiſes of their favourite monarch. He has been paralleled with Jeſus Chriſt, and Dr. *Binks*, in a ſermon before the convocation, rather gave Charles the preference; nor did Dr. *South* fall very ſhort of this in the warmth of his violent zeal. The extravagant encomiums beſtowed by ſuch wild admirers, can only be equalled by their inflammatory miſrepreſentations of the anceſtors of the diſſenters, as bringing their ſovereign to the ſcaffold. It is an indiſputable fact, that the parliament who oppoſed

poſed the king's meaſures and commenced the war, were members of the church of England; and it is equally certain that the Preſbyterians exerted themſelves ſtrenuouſly, both to prevent his death and to avenge it. That act was perpetrated by a ſet of enthuſiaſts, ſupported by an army made up of various parties. Charles attempted to raiſe himſelf above law, and this led many to think that in reſpect to him the law might be diſpenſed with. How much happier the ſtate of this nation, ſince the laws have become a rule both to prince and people!

Relying on the perſonal virtues of any monarch whatever is extremely hazardous. Human nature is frail, ſubject to change; and againſt the deviation of a ſucceſſor nothing but law can poſſibly afford ſecurity. Thus does the illuſtrious patriot *Algernon Sydney* excellently write: "Whatever virtue may be in the firſt magiſtrates, many years will not paſs before they come to be corrupted; and their ſucceſſors, deflecting from their integrity, will ſeize upon the ill-guarded prey. They will then not only govern by will, but by that irregular will, which turns the law that was made for the public good, to the private advantage of one or few men." The celebrated *Dean Swift* was a warm royaliſt, yet in his ſermon on the martyrdom of Charles I. he grants the utmoſt that any advocate for procuring liberty by law, and paying a ſupreme regard to the ſafety of the people could require. "There is no more outward value in the greateſt emperor, than in the meaneſt of his ſubjects. His body is compoſed of the ſame ſubſtance, the ſame parts, and with the ſame or greater infirmities: his education is generally worſe, by flattery, idleneſs, and luxury, and thoſe evil diſpoſitions which early power is apt to give. It is therefore againſt common ſenſe, that his private

perſonal

perſonal intereſt, or pleaſure, ſhould be put in the balance with the ſafety of millions, every one of which is his equal by nature."

CHAP. V.

THE government for about twelve years after the death of *Charles* underwent repeated changes. Epiſcopacy had been ſubverted, and the Common-Prayer ſet aſide during the late king's reign; the firſt by his own conſent, though againſt his will; the latter entirely, without his concurrence. The reaſons aſſigned by the parliament for giving up the Common-Prayer were, "That notwithſtanding all the pains and religious intentions of the compilers, it had proved an offence to many of the godly at home, and to the reformed churches abroad; that the prelates had raiſed the eſtimation of it to ſuch a height, as if God could be worſhipped in no other way, in conſequence of which the preaching of the word had been depreciated, and in ſome places wholly neglected. That it had given encouragement to an idle miniſtry, who chooſe rather to confine themſelves to forms, than exert their abilities in the gift of prayer; and that it helped to confirm the Papiſts in their idolatry and ſuperſtition, ſince they boaſted, that the Common-Prayer came up to a compliance with a great part of their ſervice, being a tranſlation of popiſh forms."—A *Directory* therefore was ſubſtituted in its ſtead, which was not an abſolute form of devotion, but certain general hints, taken partly from the word of God, and partly from rules of Chriſtian prudence, pointing out the heads of public prayer and preaching, and leaving the miniſter room to exert his own abilities. This Directory contained

contained inſtructions well worthy of attention, but a conſiderable time elapſed, before it was generally adopted. Many continued the old liturgy, ſome would read no form, and others uſed compoſitions of their own, intermixing ſuch parts of the former ſervice as they approved.

The parliament, to enforce obedience, impoſed a fine upon all ſuch miniſters as neglected uſing the Directory, or any who ſhould preach, write, or print any thing againſt it. The Common-Prayer books were removed from the churches, and ſevere penalties enacted againſt thoſe, who ſhould conduct religious worſhip by the ancient model, publicly or privately. This was an unreaſonable, arbitrary, cruel proceeding. If the new rulers claimed a power of preſcribing for the eſtabliſhed churches as ſubject to their authority, ſeparate aſſemblies or private families at leaſt ought to have enjoyed full liberty. But the rights of conſcience were at this time little underſtood, and hardly become a ſubject of conſideration even with individuals. All parties were infected with that worſt of errors a perſecuting ſpirit, and thoſe who had now gained the aſcendency manifeſted too great eagerneſs to depreſs thoſe under whoſe tyranny they had ſuffered ſo much and ſo long. Had they thrown the mantle of forgiveneſs over paſt faults, it would have manifeſted to the world that there exiſted Chriſtians worthy of that honourable name.

The conſcientious clergy of the old eſtabliſhment were expoſed to various hardſhips in theſe unſettled times. The *ſolemn league and covenant*, which was ordered to be taken by all perſons in the kingdom above eighteen, engaging to preſerve the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, to endeavour a reformation in the churches of England and Ireland, and the extirpation of Popery and prelacy (that is church government by archbiſhops,

biſhops, biſhops, &c.) was a ſore grievance. All who declined taking it were excluded from offices, civil, religious, or military. If the ruling party did not preſs it with ſtrict ſeverity, or if they adminiſtered it chiefly to thoſe who had been zealous in the royal intereſt, rather as parties in the war than as friends to the church; yet numbers of honeſt men were perplexed, who might have felt no inſurmountable objection to any oath merely reſpecting ſubmiſſion in civil matters. Religious teſts, or thoſe implying a direct approbation and preference of particular forms of government, may diſtreſs the truly upright and ſincere. Such as ſwear for convenience and quite againſt their wills, entertain no ſympathy for the honeſt and ſcrupulous, and when opportunity offers will ſeek revenge by rendering impoſition for impoſition. Many epiſcopal divines who afterwards made a diſtinguiſhed figure, took the ſolemn league and covenant; but when reſtored to power, ſhewed no mercy to ſuch as declined abjuring an engagement deliberately and ſolemnly accepted.

Dr. *Walker* publiſhed a folio book, containing above 400 pages in ſmall print, called *An Attempt towards recovering an Account of the Number and Sufferings of the Clergy*. He affirms that 10,000 ſuffered on the church ſide, and reckons it modeſt to fall to 8,000. His liſt however makes out little more than a fifth part, including ſuch as were rejected for inſufficiency, groſs immorality, and a ſteady adherence to the king. It may well be ſuppoſed that men contending, as they thought, for their liberties and moſt certainly for their lives, would attempt depreſſing ſuch as vigorouſly oppoſed them. The laws of war juſtify ſuch a conduct, ſo far at leaſt as to render them more excuſable than if actuated ſolely by religious opinions. A large proportion of the clergy being pluraliſts, thoſe who

poſſeſſed two or more preferments were obliged to put up with one. Some will hardly deem this *perſecution*, unleſs it can be proved, that an individual has a reaſonable claim to ſeveral good livings while others are left unprovided. Yet the depriving a man of what he enjoys, even in conſequence of a bad law, may prove a real miſchief. Preventing the abuſe in future, would have been a more unexceptionable courſe. This liſt was alſo greatly ſwelled by inſerting the names of pluraliſts under each ſeparate living or dignity, as if poſſeſſed by a diſtinct perſon. The profane and vicious were deſervedly caſt out, ſuch as are a ſcandal to, and will never be retained in, any well conſtituted religious ſociety. By the beſt computations it appears that the ſufferers amongſt the eſtabliſhed clergy, could not far exceed two thouſand, taking the ignorant and vicious into the account. And it is worthy of ſpecial notice, theſe were allowed *a fifth part* of the ſequeſtered livings, which ſome ſtatedly received. It is no wonder various complaints reſpecting deficiencies ſhould have exiſted, when the ravages of war would not unfrequently deſtroy a miniſter's whole annual income, and multitudes of laymen under different pretences paid no tithes at all. Some unprincipled perſons, without doubt, ſought pretences for making as much as poſſible of the preferments they had obtained, and too willingly moleſted the depreſſed party. There were however thoſe amongſt the peaceable who remained unhurt, and ſeveral (as Dr. *Fuller*, the church hiſtorian affirms) "would have lived free from diſturbance had they not printed and preached ſatires on the times." From this, prudence ſhould have reſtrained, becauſe they when in power had unhappily given ſuch high provocation and helped ſo largely to irritate and inflame.

Some

Some clergymen of prime worth, undoubtedly experienced much ill uſage, and the pious biſhop HALL's "*Hard meaſures*" have raiſed compaſſion in feeling Chriſtians of oppoſite perſuaſions. The learned biſhop *Prideaux*, likewiſe, ſo expreſſed himſelf in a jocular ſtrain as to affect humane hearts more deeply than the warmeſt invective. A friend coming to ſee him, and ſaluting him in the common form of, How does your lordſhip do? He replied, "Never better in my life, only I have too great a ſtomach; for I have eaten that little plate which the ſequeſtrator left me: I have eaten a great library of excellent books; I have eaten a great deal of linen, much of my braſs, ſome of my pewter, and now I am come to eat iron; and what will come next I know not."

The general body of Nonconformiſts however, a few years after, would have thought themſelves happy under a government they had heartily concurred in reſtoring, with allowances equal to thoſe granted to the clergy under that which they oppoſed. Dr. *Calamy* made this appear in a pamphlet, entitled, *The Church and the Diſſenters compared as to Perſecution*. Mr. *Lewis*, of Maidſtone, a clergyman of note, and a particular friend of Dr. *Walker*, thus ſpeaks of the *Attempt*, &c. (in *Remarks on a Sermon of Dr. Biſſe*, who had recommended the work): "Inſtead of what I expected it to be, an account of thoſe worthy men, who in the time of the civil war and uſurpation were perſecuted for righteouſneſs-ſake, and loſt all that they could not keep with a good conſcience, for the ſake of their duty to God and the king, I ſaw a huge heap of the moſt heterogeneous characters, and like the Popiſh bead roll of their ſaints and martyrs, a great many of them much more deſerving to have their names blotted out, than their memory to be preſerved."

The Puritan miniſters have been frequently ſtyled a ſet of canting illiterate creatures, famous for nothing but fanatic enthuſiaſm or groſs hypocriſy. This is the mere rant of ignorant or crafty bigots. From the very beginning of the reformation, men of the firſt learning claſſed themſelves amongſt the advocates for further alterations, whoſe works remain to teſtify their merit, and will be read and eſteemed by the beſt judges, as long as any of their contemporary authors. After the civil war commenced, their inveterate enemies have confeſſed, that notwithſtanding the learning and merit of many who were ejected from the univerſities for a warm attachment to the royal cauſe, ſuch were placed in their ſtead as diſplayed eminent talents, and kept more than a common watch over the morals of the ſtudents. They were indefatigable inſtructors of their pupils both in public and private. Strict piety and a ſerious attention to religious duties were countenanced; drunkenneſs, oaths, and the profanation of the Lord's-day were baniſhed. As ſeveral of the profeſſors left laſting monuments of their abilities behind them, ſo thoſe who were afterwards the glory of the Engliſh church, and will always be reckoned amongſt the moſt eminent divines the world ever produced, owed their education to theſe tutors, and always retained the higheſt reſpect for them. Lord *Clarendon* acknowledges, "That period yielded an "extraordinary harveſt in all kinds of good learn-"ing;" a full proof that men of puritanical principles, when in power, encouraged it.

Amongſt the parochial clergy, ſome indeed were of mean abilities, as was the caſe under the hierarchy; but a decent behaviour at leaſt was deemed eſſential; which when the biſhops ruled was not ſufficiently exacted. A majority of the officiating miniſters during the time epiſcopacy was abo-

liſhed

liſhed were truly reſpectable, applying with diligence to every paſtoral duty and wonderfully improving the morals of their hearers. When we read "that the church was laid in ruins," we muſt underſtand no more by it, than that its temporal power was ſubverted: lordſhips, pluralities, &c. vaniſhed, but religion and virtue gained ground.

Something exiſted under the name of *godlineſs*, which, in many inſtances, was probably nothing more than the faſhion of the times; but an attention to bare outward forms alone, did not characterize this period. The legal conſtitution was ſubverted, but never were better laws enacted againſt vice, or more effectually put into execution. The dreſs, the behaviour, the language of the people was decent and ſober; their manner of living frugal; a bankruptcy was hardly heard of once in a year, nor could a faulty bankrupt ever wipe off the infamy. Trade, indeed, was far from being ſo extenſive as at preſent, yet ſtill the failures of this and the ſucceeding times bear no proportion. All kinds of profaneneſs ſunk into diſrepute; the Lord's-day was obſerved with ſolemn ſtrictneſs; ſcarcely any appeared walking in the ſtreets, but the churches were crowded; whilſt reading the ſcriptures, ſinging pſalms, catechizing children and ſervants, with other religious duties, filled up the intervals of public worſhip. On the whole it would be difficult to mention a period when ſerious devotion and ſound morals appeared to prevail more than in this.

An attempt was made at the commencement of the civil war, to ſettle all religious diſputes, in an aſſembly choſen for that purpoſe, who continued ſitting from *July* 1643 to *April* 1653. As it is juſtly obſerved in the introduction to the *Nonconformiſt's Memorial*, p. 7. "This was not a convocation according to the dioceſian form of govern-

ment, or called by the votes of the miniſters after the Preſbyterian way, but the parliament choſe all the members themſelves, merely with a view to have their opinion and advice for ſettling the government, liturgy, and doctrine of the church of England. And they were confined in their debates to ſuch things as the parliament propoſed. Becauſe they would ſeem impartial, they choſe many of the moſt learned epiſcopal divines, but few of them came; ſix or ſeven Independents were added, that all ſides might be heard. Many lords and commons were joined with them, to ſee that they did not go beyond their commiſſion." This addition of laymen would have been highly proper had no ſuch apprehenſion been entertained, ſince what relates to religion equally concerns every rational being, as thoſe who ſuſtain the miniſterial office. The divines who met were moſtly men of eminent learning and valuable characters, being choſen by parliament from ſuch liſts as the knights and burgeſſes brought in, of perſons beſt qualified in their ſeveral counties. The laymen were truly reſpectable and well acquainted with ſacred as well as civil concerns: Mr. *Selden* was in himſelf an hoſt. This profound ſcholar had excited the enmity of the clergy, by his book proving "that tithes were not due under the Chriſtian diſpenſation by Divine right," and in this aſſembly he withſtood the high claims of the zealous Preſbyterians, ſiding with the *Eraſtians*, who maintained—that no one form of church-government is preſcribed in ſcripture, as an invariable rule for future ages, but that magiſtrates might appoint and vary it at their diſcretion, if nothing were enacted contrary to the word of God. Preſbyterianiſm however, through the powerful influence of the Scots, gained an eſtabliſhment much againſt the inclination of all conſiſtent friends to liberty.

This

This aſſembly appeared deſirous of promoting the knowledge and practice of religion, but were ſtrongly and unhappily averſe from toleration; yet it deſerves to be mentioned to their honour, that the *confeſſion of faith* drawn up was not made the legal ſtandard of orthodoxy, nor any ſubſcription or aſſent to it required as a term of Chriſtian communion. When the Scots commiſſioners propoſed, that the anſwers in the *ſhorter catechiſm* ſhould be ſubſcribed by all the members, the motion was rejected, after a conſiderable number had ſhewn that it was an unwarrantable impoſition. The catechiſm itſelf was a ſyſtem of religion, agreeable to the ſentiments then generally received by all Proteſtant churches, and nothing advanced but what was ſupported by expreſs quotations from ſcripture, appearing to the compilers full and clear proofs, however capable ſome of them might be, in the opinions of others, of a different interpretation.

If the parliament had protected the peaceable of all perſuaſions, without diſtinction, in the public exerciſe of the religious ſervices they approved; if they had manifeſted as legiſlators a preference to none, but adhered ſteadily as individuals, to what in conſcience they judged beſt; truth, virtue, and liberty would have been more effectually promoted, than by all their attempts, however well meant, to eſtabliſh one uniform mode. Various enlightened individuals began now to ſee the neceſſity of freedom, in order to promote peace amongſt Chriſtians, and *Cromwell* and his officers, who juſtly diſliked a Preſbyterian equally with an epiſcopal eſtabliſhment, diſſolved the parliament and their ſynod both together.

Oliver Cromwell was a perfect model for thoſe politicians who ſcruple the uſe of no means which may accompliſh their ends. To the advancement of

of learning he manifeſted a ſtrong regard, and was a real encourager of it. The univerſity of *Oxford* in particular acknowledged his generoſity, and he ordered a ſcheme to be drawn up, for founding and endowing a college at *Durham* to accommodate the northern ſtudents. His diſpoſition appeared leſs intolerant than that of any ruler of that age; ſo that though no man affected more regard for worthy divines, he would not enliſt under any particular ſect, declaring, "It was his only wiſh "and deſire, to ſee the church in peace, and that "all would gather into one ſheep-fold, under one "ſhepherd Jeſus Chriſt, and mutually love one "another." Though the public uſe of the Common-Prayer was unjuſtly denied to the epiſcopal party, yet he allowed the uſe of their rites in private houſes, and laid them under reſtraints rather as royaliſts than epiſcopalians. In that latter character they were not obnoxious to him; which was manifeſted amongſt other things, by his beſtowing 500l. on the funeral of archbiſhop *Uſher*, as a tribute of reſpect to his great piety and learning.

But whatever political ſentiments any men entertained, theſe ought to have formed no pretence for interfering in the ſmalleſt degree with their religious ſervices. The protector's ſafety in all probability, and moſt aſſuredly his dignity, would have been more effectually preſerved, by diſplaying a manly confidence; in accepting the ſubmiſſion of every party in civil affairs, leaving their religious concerns to themſelves, to which on the whole he appeared not averſe.

When a violent proſecution was commenced againſt the eminently pious and learned Mr. *Biddle*, who departed from the orthodox faith relating to the Trinity, though it was inconſiſtent with his political views wholly to ſtop the proceedings, he ſheltered him from the moſt furious of his enemies.

mies. The law would have conſigned Mr. Biddle to the flames, but after he had been detained ſome time in priſon, Oliver baniſhed him to St. Mary's caſtle in one of the Scilly Iſlands, allowing a hundred crowns yearly for his ſubſiſtence. A clear proof of moderation, ſince his own orthodoxy was never doubted, and this exile was rather a ſecurity than a puniſhment to the accuſed, conſidering the ſpirit that prevailed. Mr. *Firmin*, ſince ſo renowned for his charities, being then an apprentice, ventured to deliver a petition into the protector's hand, praying that Mr. *Biddle* might be releaſed out of Newgate; who replied to his young petitioner, "You curl-pate boy, you, do you think I will ſhew any favour to a man that denies his Saviour and diſturbs the government." If the refuſal bore an appearance of harſhneſs, the introduction to it diſplayed good humour rather than ſeverity. A thorough paced bigot would have replied in a different ſtyle, and laid hold of, inſtead of diſmiſſing the ſuppliant. He exceedingly reſpected Dr. *Owen*, a man of the firſt name amongſt the Independents, who while dean of Chriſt-Church, Oxford, and vice-chancellor of that univerſity, diſcovered commendable moderation in repeated inſtances. Though often urged to it, Dr. *Owen* would by no means interrupt the aſſembly of the royaliſts at the houſe of Dr. *Willis*, an eminent phyſician, where divine ſervice was performed according to the liturgy of the Engliſh church. Moreover, in his office of commiſſioner, for ejecting ſcandalous miniſters, he frequently over-ruled his brethren in behalf of deſerving royaliſts, and particularly befriended Dr. *Pococke*, the famous orientaliſt; who though highly diſtinguiſhed by learning, yet not preaching to the taſte of his pariſhioners, was in danger of being rejected for inſufficiency. Dr. *Owen* was the firſt Engliſh writer in favour of toleration, and was ſtrongly

ſtrongly diſpoſed to practiſe it. Cromwell's regard for this liberal-minded divine forms a preſumption, connected with other circumſtances, that his ſentiments were favourable to religious liberty. After the reſtoration, the doctor's anſwer to a Popiſh book, entitled *Fiat Lux*, recommended him to the eſteem of lord-chancellor *Clarendon*, who told him, that "he had deſerved the beſt of any Engliſh Proteſtant of late years, and that the church was "bound to own and advance him;" at the ſame time offering preferment, which from principle he was obliged to decline. Perſons of the firſt rank were delighted with and ſought his converſation. *James* II. when duke of York, held ſeveral diſcourſes with him reſpecting the diſſenters, and he had the honour of being two hours in conference with *Charles* II. who aſſured the doctor of his favour and reſpect, adding that he might have acceſs to him whenever he would. The king acknowledged that wrong had been done to the diſſenters, and gave the doctor a thouſand guineas to diſtribute amongſt thoſe who had ſuffered moſt. Theſe few particulars relating to ſo eminent a man, whoſe works ſtill maintain their reputation, deſerve being recorded.

Cromwell, though ambitious of power, and determined at all events to keep it, retained a decency of character very well becoming the firſt magiſtrate. No appearance of licentiouſneſs was ſuffered at his court, and an external ſobriety became the prevailing faſhion. Amongſt foreign ſtates, the honour and dignity of Britain was moſt nobly aſſerted. The prime miniſter of France (*Louis* XIV. being then a minor) trembled at his name, and all the Proteſtants abroad relied on him as their powerful guardian and firm ſupporter. He died *Sept.* 3, 1658, nearly 60 years of age. *Waller*, *Dryden*, *Spratt*, and other fine genuiſes, afterwards great royaliſts,

royaliſts, celebrated his memory and exploits in the moſt flattering accents of applauſe.

Richard his eldeſt ſon was proclaimed protector, and might have continued in power, by taking off a few military opponents; but rejecting this advice, he anſwered like a wiſe man and a true Chriſtian, "That a crown was not worth purchaſing with blood." Retiring into a virtuous privacy, he cloſed a well ſpent life comfortably and ſerenely at an advanced age.

After the death of Oliver and the reſignation of Richard Cromwell, the government was in a confuſed and unſettled ſtate. The Preſbyterians however were very zealous and hearty for the reſtoration of *Charles* II. as he himſelf acknowledged in his declaration concerning eccleſiaſtical affairs. "When we were in Holland, we were attended "by many grave and learned miniſters, from "hence, of the Preſbyterian opinion, and to our "great ſatisfaction we found them full of affection "to us." While they were waiting in an antichamber, Charles was loudly uttering devout expreſſions, which led old Mr. *Jackſon*, in the ſimplicity of his heart, "to thank God they were about to have a praying king." The profligate Charles indeed amongſt the Preſbyterians in Scotland, had acted the hypocrite as completely as ever "the enthuſiaſt Cromwell" did.

Biſhop Burnet acknowledges, "that many of the Preſbyterian miniſters, chiefly in the city of London, had gone into the deſign of the reſtoration in ſo ſignal a manner, and with ſuch ſucceſs, that they had great merit and a juſt title to very high preferment." Mr. *Baxter*, who had boldly told Cromwell, when in the height of his power, "that he did not know what the nation had done to forfeit their ancient bleſſing of a king," gives the following reaſons for the conduct of his party. "They

"They were influenced by the Covenant, and by the oaths of allegiance to the king and his heirs, whereby they held themſelves bound to do their utmoſt to reſtore the king, let the event be what it would. But moſt of them had ſtrong expectations of favour and reſpect; they hoped ſubſcriptions to certain canons would be removed, and the Common-Prayer and ceremonies left indifferent. Others depended on ſuch a full toleration as the Proteſtants in France enjoyed. But thoſe who were better acquainted with the principles and tempers of the prelates, declared that they expected to be ſilenced, impriſoned, and baniſhed, yet they would do all to reſtore the king, becauſe no foreſeen ill conſequences ought to hinder them from doing their duty."

The king was invited home in a ſtrange hurry, without any terms being made, of which the nation had afterwards ſufficient cauſe to repent. It is very certain that *Charles*, if he had any religion at all, was a Papiſt; but on his coming to London, ten of the Preſbyterian miniſters were appointed his chaplains, and he publiſhed a declaration, which contented a large majority both in town and country. Had it paſſed into a law, it would in a great meaſure have prevented the ſeparation that followed; but neither the king nor miniſtry intended this, if they could ſtand their ground upon the footing of the old eſtabliſhment. However, upon the terms of this declaration, Dr. *Reynolds* accepted the biſhopric of Norwich. Mr. *Baxter* declined the ſee of Hereford, for ſome other reaſons, and Mr. *Calamy* that of Litchfield and Coventry, till the king's declaration ſhould paſs into a law. Dr. *Bates*, Dr. *Manton*, and Mr. *Bowles*, refuſed the deaneries of Litchfield, Rocheſter, and York, finding how things were likely to go at court. This was acting with true Chriſtian prudence, for had they accepted

cepted theſe preferments, it might have enſnared them to comply with what was afterwards impoſed. Not being thus biaſſed, they were better able to witneſs a good confeſſion and undergo the enſuing perſecution.

Both the lords and commons, on reading the king's declaration, agreed to wait on him in a body and return him their thanks. Moreover, the commons ordered a bill to be brought in to paſs it into a law; but the queſtion being put for a ſecond reading, it paſſed in the negative, with ſufficient proof that the king and the biſhops were averſe from it, notwithſtanding their pretences. The biſhops ſoon began acting in ſuch a manner, as to furniſh the Preſbyterians reaſon to tell them, which they accordingly did, "That they perceived their "counſels againſt peace were likely to be accom- "pliſhed, and that they would be gratified with "their ſilence and ejection." The declaration being rejected, they went on briſkly, reſtoring all things to the old ſtandard; men of the higheſt principles, and the moſt inveterate againſt the Preſbyterians, were preferred to the biſhoprics, and the perſecution began.

Mr. *Croſton*, miniſter of Aldgate, was impriſoned for writing in defence of the covenant, and after being put to great expence deprived of his living, though he had a wife and ſeven children and zealouſly promoted the king's reſtoration. Mr. *Parſons*, rector of Wem, a noted royaliſt, was taken from his houſe by ſix ſoldiers, for ſeditious preaching and nonconformity to the ceremonies, promiſed in his majeſty's declaration to be left indifferent; for which he was fined 200l. and to continue in priſon till paid. Spies were ſent into the churches ſupplied by miniſters unfavourable to epiſcopacy; and if any lamented the degeneracy of the times, for which there was great occaſion, ſince vice and

profaneneſs came in with the king like a flood; if any expreſſed a concern for the cauſe of religion, preached againſt perfidiouſneſs, or glanced at the vices of the court, they were marked for enemies to the king and government. Several loyal preachers were ſent to priſon upon ſuch informations, amongſt whom was the eminently learned and prudent Mr. *Howe*. When brought to trial, the court was guarded with ſoldiers, and their friends not ſuffered to ſpeak to them.

So eager were the ſpiritual courts to revive their power, that many were cited into them and ſequeſtered from their livings, for not wearing the ſurplice and uſing the ceremonies, before they were legally reſtored. About forty bills of indictment were found by the grand jury at Exeter, againſt miniſters for not reading the Common-Prayer. An act was likewiſe paſſed for reinſtating thoſe miniſters who had been deprived of their livings, not only ſuch as had loſt them for their attachment to the former king, which appeared reaſonable; but thoſe who had been guilty of the groſſeſt immorality were included. Thus ſome hundreds were removed before the act of uniformity paſſed; only the king promiſed they ſhould be preferred again when the preſent poſſeſſor died. Another act alſo took place in 1660, decreeing, "That no perſons "ſhall hereafter be choſen into any place of ho-"nour, profit, or truſt, that ſhall not within one "year next before ſuch an election or choice, have "taken the Lord's ſupper, according to the rites "of the church of England." To further the deſigns of politicians, an holy ordinance was ſhamefully abuſed, and numbers as a reward for their paſt ſervices, diſqualified for all poſts at once.

March 25, 1661, according to a promiſe in his majeſty's declaration, an equal number of epiſcopal and

and preſbyterian divines were appointed to review the liturgy of the church, and make ſuch alterations and additions as ſhould be thought neceſſary. This was called the *Savoy* conference, becauſe there held. It had been concluded beforehand at court, to make only a few amendments in the liturgy, and nothing more was intended than to drop the Preſbyterians with ſome plauſible appearance of decency. Their arguments had little weight with the biſhops, though they ſhewed themſelves to be men of learning and well verſed in the doctrine and diſcipline of the primitive church. But they were interrupted and affronted; a number of young divines who gained admittance laughed them to ſcorn. From arguments the miniſters deſcended to entreaties, and prayed the biſhops to take compaſſion on ſcrupulous minds, and not depoſe their weaker brethren. They ſuggeſted that if the Nonconformiſts ſhould be turned out, there would not be miniſters enough to fill the vacant pulpits: they urged their peaceable behaviour in the late times; what they had ſuffered for the royal cauſe, and the active part they took in reſtoring the king. They pleaded the late declaration and the deſign of the preſent conference. To all which the biſhops replied, "That they were commiſſioned only to make ſuch alterations in the liturgy as ſhould be neceſſary and ſuch as ſhould be agreed upon." The miniſters ſaid, the word *neceſſary*, muſt refer to tender conſciences, but the biſhops replied, they found no alterations neceſſary, and were not obliged to make them till proved ſo. The miniſters beſought them to conſider what ill conſequences might follow upon a ſeparation. All however availed nothing. Their lordſhips were in authority, and would not abate the ſmalleſt ceremony, or correct the moſt objectionable ſentiment, when a real regard for the honour of God,

the peace of the church, and the good of ſouls, would have diſpoſed them to ſome little compliances.

The king's commiſſion expired *July* 25, and the conference ended without any proſpect of accommodation. On the 20th of *November*, the king ſent a letter to the convocation, commanding them to review the book of Common-Prayer, and to make ſuch additions and amendments as ſhould appear neceſſary. To form this convocation according to the mind of the court and biſhops, great care and pains were uſed to keep out and to get in men by undue proceedings; and proteſtations were drawn againſt all incumbents not ordained by biſhops. Some hundreds of the Preſbyterians had likewiſe been deprived of their livings, yet that intereſt carried it in London for Mr. *Baxter* and Mr. *Calamy*; but Dr. *Sheldon*, biſhop of that ſee, who had a power of chooſing four out of ſix, within a certain circuit, excluded both. Various alterations were made, but, as biſhop *Burnet* obſerves, "None in favour of the Preſbyterians; ſo that the Common-Prayer was more exceptionable; and the terms of conformity harder than before." The Puritans had always objected to reading *apocryphal leſſons* as part of the public ſervice, which cauſed a doctor of the convocation to relate, as a matter of triumph, "That they had carried it for Bel and the Dragon."

There is abundant reaſon to ſuppoſe, that matters were thus contrived on purpoſe to diſtreſs the ſcrupulous. When the earl of *Mancheſter* told the king, "That the terms of conformity were ſo hard, that "he feared many miniſters would not comply "with them," biſhop *Sheldon*, of chief influence in the buſineſs, replied, "that he was afraid they would;" and Dr. *Allen* ſaying, "It was a pity the door was ſo ſtrait," the ſame biſhop rejoined, "It

"It is no pity; if we had thought ſo many of "them would have conformed, we would have "made it ſtraiter." His zeal was ſoon rewarded with the primacy, the temporal honours and riches of which were well adapted to his taſte and character.

The *Act of Uniformity* was carried in the Houſe of Commons by a majority of ſix only, and encountered ſtrong obſtacles in the Houſe of Lords; who propoſed amongſt other things, excepting ſchool-maſters from the ſubſcriptions required. But the commons, being ſupported by the court, would abate nothing, nor conſent to any proviſion for ſuch as ſhould be ejected. On *May* the 19th, 1662, it received the royal aſſent, and was to take place *Auguſt* 24th following, being St. *Bartholomew's-day*, rendered remarkable ninety years before by the bloody maſſacre of the Proteſtants at *Paris* and throughout *France*. It is worthy of particular obſervation that the Common-Prayer-Book with alterations, to which aſſent was demanded, was not publiſhed till within a few days of the time above mentioned. Hundreds therefore could not poſſibly ſee it; numbers aſſented without ſeeing, and others were ejected for neglecting a compliance with they knew not what.

The re-ordination inſiſted on was an inſupportable objection to thoſe, who thought it implied a renouncing the validity of their former orders from Preſbyters. Few clergymen in *Ireland*, where alone an explanation was permitted, would have kept their ſtations, had it not been for the very ſoftening clauſe, "That re-ordination by a biſhop did not annihilate former orders (if the miniſter had any) but only ſupplied what was wanting according to the canons of the church of England."

Various were the objections of different perſons. The principal one was, "That they could not

" give their aſſent and conſent, to *all* and *every* " *thing* contained in the book of Common-Prayer, " &c." though they allowed the greateſt part to be good and uſeful; and it has ever been hard for many clergymen to do it, this aſſent being deemed in law, not merely a promiſe to uſe, but a deliberate approbation of the whole.

A ſingular and moſt exceptionable addition was now made to one of the prayers for the king; the title of *moſt religious* being given him, and appointed for perpetual uſe, whatever the character of the reigning monarch may be. To compliment our fellow-mortals, even the good, in our addreſſes to heaven, is highly improper: to flatter the wicked is horrible. But to apply the epithet *moſt religious* to *Charles* II. was both profane and ludicrous; ſince religion was with him a conſtant ſubject of ridicule, and his whole conduct an open defiance of every thing which it dictates. He could not be called religious as a friend to the church of England, ſince he favoured Popery; nor could he be called religious as a Papiſt, becauſe he was an unprincipled diſſembler. How muſt he and his profligate courtiers have been hardened in their infidelity and wickedneſs, by hearing grave-faced divines, in ſolemn addreſſes to the Almighty, apply this language to one whoſe character and ſentiments were ſo ſcandalouſly infamous.

Mr. *Baxter* and ſeveral others quitted their ſtations ſooner than the appointed day, that the miniſters throughout England might know what they had determined. Others preached their farewell ſermons on the Lord's-day before, diſplaying ſuch a paſſionate zeal for the welfare of their people as drew tears from almoſt every eye. At length when the fatal Bartholomew-day came, about two thouſand quitted their preferments, or refuſed to accept of any upon the terms of the *Act of uniformity*: an example

example hardly to be paralleled in the Chriſtian world.

Lord Bolingbrooke, in his *Diſſertation on parties*, towards the end of the ſecond letter, ſpeaking very honourably concerning a part of the Nonconformiſts, obſerves, "that ſome leading men amongſt them "thought it better to be at the head of a ſect, "than at the the tail of an eſtabliſhment." Lord B. is not the only writer who has inſinuated, that this kind of vanity had a conſiderable influence on their conduct. It is certain however, that the chief leaders amongſt the fathers of nonconformity might have been placed at the head of the eſtabliſhment itſelf, being offered ſeats on the epiſcopal bench, to ſay nothing of the deaneries which they refuſed, —good ſteps at leaſt towards the higheſt dignities. Among the livings they actually poſſeſſed, ſome were of prime value. They not only loſt theſe by their nonconformity, but they expoſed themſelves alſo to ſufferings at which nature recoils, and nothing ſhort of Chriſtian ſincerity and fortitude could have enabled men who enjoyed the uſe of their underſtandings to bear them. Peculiar cruelty was exerciſed in fixing the time of their ejectment. Had they been permitted to hold their livings till Michaelmas, they would have been entitled to the profits of them for the paſt year, tithes then becoming due. Their being turned out in *Auguſt* deprived them of the benefit of nearly eleven months actual ſervice, which thoſe who ſucceeded them took without any juſt claim. Not a few perhaps, had unavoidably contracted debts for the maintenance of their families, which the loſs of the income due to them occaſioned much difficulty in ſettling. The approach of winter moreover muſt have caſt a damp on their ſpirits, when forced, with wives, children, and, ſome probably, with aged infirm parents, or other relatives and dependents,

dents, to quit their livings and their habitations, and be caſt entirely upon the mercy of the world. It cannot be ſuppoſed that any conſiderable number, eſpecially of ſuch as had matrimonial connexions, enjoyed any adequate means of ſupport beſides their clerical incomes. The laws alſo effectually excluded them from keeping ſchool or taking private pupils, one chief reſource of literary men in diſtreſs.

After the reformation, in the time of queen Elizabeth, not above two hundred were deprived of their livings; and theſe experienced great mildneſs, having ſome allowance from the church. The ingratitude of the high party towards the Nonconformiſts, was thus cenſured by a miniſter of the eſtabliſhment: "I muſt own that in my judg-
"ment, however both ſides have been exceſſively
"to blame, yet that the ſeverities uſed by the church
"to the Diſſenters, are leſs excuſable than thoſe
"uſed by the Diſſenters to the church. My reaſon
"is, that the former were uſed in times of peace
"and a ſettled government, whereas the latter
"were inflicted in a time of tumult and confuſion,
"ſo that the plunderings and ravages of church-
"miniſters, were owing, many of them at leaſt,
"to the rudeneſs of ſoldiers and the chances of
"war: they were plundered not becauſe they were
"Conformiſts, but Cavaliers and of the king's
"party. The allowing of the ſequeſtered miniſ-
"ters a fifth part of their livings, was a Chriſtian
"act, and what I confeſs I ſhould have been glad
"to have ſeen imitated at the reſtoration. But
"no mercy was ſhewn to theſe unhappy ſuf-
"ferers."

This ingratitude was moreover a bitter aggravation to the calamities of the diſtreſſed. To ſay nothing of the tendency which the grievous perſecution of the Puritans, during a long period, had

had to warm their ſpirits againſt the immediate authors of them, "Who (ſays a conforming di-"vine) can anſwer for the violence and injuſtice "of actions in a civil war? Theſe ſufferings of "the church-men were in a time of general cala-"mity; but thoſe were ejected not only in a time "of peace, but a time of joy to all the land, and "after an act of oblivion, when all pretended to "be reconciled and made friends, and to whoſe "common rejoicings theſe ſuffering miniſters had "contributed their earneſt prayers and great en-"deavours."

Notwithſtanding their good ſervices, they were left to beg or ſtarve, or get bread how they could. Some indeed were taken as chaplains into ſubſtantial families, and charitable contributions afforded precarious relief. But hundreds groaned under lamentable hardſhips; the people they left not being able, and often even afraid, to aſſiſt them, ſince it might have been deemed a maintenance of ſchiſm or faction. A church-writer reckoning up their ſufferings, amongſt ſundry other grievances, ſays, "Though they were as frugal as poſſible, they "could hardly live; ſome had little more than "brown bread and water; many had but eight or "ten pounds a year to maintain a family, ſo that "a piece of fleſh has not come to their tables in "ſix weeks time; their allowance could ſcarce "afford them bread and cheeſe. One went to "plough ſix days and preached on the Lord's-day; "another cut tobacco for a livelihood. The zea-"lous juſtices of the peace, who knew the cala-"mities of the miniſters, iſſued out warrants upon "ſome of the hearers, becauſe of the poverty of "the preachers." They were railed at in the pulpit under the name of fanatics; run down in a ſhameful manner at the univerſities; expoſed in the play-houſes without regard to religion or de-

cency,

cency, and inſulted by the mob ſo as to render it needful to walk in diſguiſe.

Beſides what they ſuffered in common with the laity, the *five mile act* fell heavily upon them. By this all Nonconformiſts miniſters were forbidden, on pain of ſix months impriſonment, "to come or be (except merely in paſſing in the road) within five miles of any corporation, or any place where they had been miniſters," unleſs they would take an oath, which the earl of Southampton, though a courtier, ſaid *no honeſt man could take*, it being an oath "not at any time to endeavour any alteration in the church or ſtate." If ſuch a law were enacted in a popiſh or heathen country, neither could reformation be introduced into the one, nor Chriſtianity into the other, and a people once enſlaved would be debarred from uſing any efforts to recover their liberties. Dr. *Bates* and a few others ſubmitted, the judge on the bench declaring at the time, that by the word "endeavour" muſt be meant *unlawful* endeavour. But this explanation did not ſatisfy the minds of the generality, who thought the act forbade *any kind* of endeavour, and they ſtood expoſed to all the penalties of this ſevere and tyrannical ſtatute.

But what grieved them moſt of all was, their inability for uſefulneſs. There never exiſted a ſet of miniſters, more zealous for the real intereſt of their people, or who laboured more diligently, both in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon. Now they could not preach or even pray in their own families, if five beſides the uſual houſehold were preſent, without having their effects ſeized, and themſelves committed to priſon, to be arraigned at the quarter-ſeſſions like felons. They did all they could to keep within the compaſs of the law, and preached frequently twice a day in large families with only four ſtrangers, and as many under ſixteen years of

of age as would come, ſuch not being prohibited. Sometimes they ventured to preach in fields and woods; but notwithſtanding the utmoſt caution, numbers of them were committed to priſon, where ſome being long confined, caught ſuch diſorders as ruined their health, and ſome died in gaol.

To the learning as well as to the zeal of the ejected miniſters, their WORKS will bear a laſting teſtimony, though our language has ſince been materially improved or at leaſt refined. They were almoſt wholly *theological*, as became divines; but thoſe who peruſe them will find that the knowledge of the authors was deep and extenſive. They had a thorough acquaintance with the fathers of the church, were quite familiar with the Greek and Roman claſſics, and well verſed in civil and eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; many of them in mathematics, natural philoſophy, and every kind both of ornamental and uſeful ſcience.

Thoſe leaſt eminent for literature, were well read in the ſcriptures; and if ſome poſſeſſed only mean abilities, this cannot detract from the general character of theſe perſecuted worthies and upright confeſſors. It has been obſerved by competent examiners, that there is hardly one argument urged by the celebrated divines of the eſtabliſhment, who have exerted their beſt abilities in the ſermons preached at Mr. *Boyles's Lecture*, but what may be found in Mr. *Baxter's Reaſons for the Chriſtian Religion*. Their declared enmity to every kind of vicious indulgence, and ſome diverſions generally thought innocent, has been called ſourneſs. To ſtage-plays they were quite inimical, which created them enemies amongſt the wits, who revenged the cauſe of the affronted theatre, with the moſt abuſive ſatire and ridicule. But this enmity was not peculiar to the Nonconformiſts. The ſevereſt writer that ever exerted his talents againſt the ſtage, was the

the very learned *Jeremy Collier*, remarkable for his high-church and jacobite principles. It was not Puritaniſm, but a regard to virtue and common decency, which ſet all ſober minded perſons of the laſt age againſt plays; thoſe then exhibited being abominably licentious and profane. Archbiſhop *Tillotſon* called the play-houſe, "the devil's chapel, the place of debauchery, the ſchool and nurſery of lewdneſs and vice;" and added concerning parents, who led their children to ſuch places, "they are monſters, I had almoſt ſaid devils."

The debaucheries of the court were ſo exceſſive, as to ſhock thoſe of every party who held religion, morals, or decency in any kind of eſtimation. If the Nonconformiſts were too rigid and general in their cenſures of amuſements, the candid will readily admit, that the various ſufferings they underwent, tended materially to alter good natural tempers, and to weaken that diſpoſition to cheerfulneſs and feſtivity which eaſier circumſtances might have encouraged. Their ſincerity can hardly be doubted, when they ſubmitted to the moſt trying hardſhips purely for conſcience-ſake. Nor can they be deemed enthuſiaſts, whoſe uniformly good conduct proceeding, as there was every reaſon to believe, from a firm ſteady piety, evinced calm and deliberate conſideration.

The renowned Mr. *Locke*, who lived in theſe times, entitles them "worthy, learned, pious, orthodox divines, who did not throw themſelves out of ſervice, but were forcibly ejected."—"I have heard them vilified" (ſaid a learned conformiſt) "but I dare not but be juſt to them as to eminent profeſſors of the Chriſtian faith, and think that common Chriſtianity has ſuffered much by their ſilence and diſparagement."

Gloomy as they are ſaid to have been, they could occaſionally appear as ſmart and witty as their adverſaries.

adverſaries. One who by conformity had kept a good living, meeting an ejected divine, ſcoffingly told him, "his coat was worn thread bare."—"True, (replied the inſulted confeſſor) but it has never been TURNED." A biſhop alſo, inclined to be merry, aſked a miniſter accuſed of preaching, "Why the Nonconformiſts ſo generally ſpoke "through their *noſes?*" To which he anſwered, "If it be ſo, my lord, we have very good reaſon, "for you and your brethren have ſtopped our "MOUTHS." Mr. *Alſop*'s reply to dean Sherlock, who had abundantly ridiculed his party, was written with as much keenneſs and ſatire, as any book publiſhed in that age, and drew commendation from Dr. *South*, not more celebrated for his wit, than for his implacable hatred to the Nonconformiſts.

Theſe excellent divines being caſt out, there remained not a ſupply of miniſters to carry on the public ſervices of religion. All the ſtriplings in both univerſities were employed, yet ſeveral poor livings in the country obtained no incumbents for a conſiderable time. A ſtrict church-man warmly complained, "of above three thouſand admitted who were unable to teach becauſe of their youth; of fifteen hundred debauched men ordained, and of the ordination of many illiterate ones." Even a cobler publiſhed an account of a large number of ſcandalous Conformiſt miniſters, and named their ſcandal to the no ſmall diſpleaſure of the clergy; but, as Mr *Baxter* apprehended, "many of the Conformiſts were glad of any thing to humble the prelates." Certainly all wiſe and moderate members of the eſtabliſhment, muſt have felt uneaſy at what was done by the paſſionately zealous. In the opinion of a learned Conformiſt, "the young clergy were florid preachers, and had more of a romantic than divine ſtyle, who captivated men at

firſt, but did little ſervice to their ſouls, and in proceſs of time had fewer friends and admirers than in the beginning."

Many who complied with the terms of conformity, did it, not becauſe they liked them, but for the ſake of their families, and becauſe they were unwilling to lie buried in ſilence. The venerable biſhops *Reynolds*, *Wilkins*, *Hopkins*, *Fowler*, and ſundry others, might be named as reluctant Conformiſts. Nearly two thouſand however, with noble reſolution, ſacrificed every thing to principle, and choſe reproaches, afflictions, and want, rather than comply when conſcience revolted. Much they ſuffered in the glorious cauſe of liberty and truth. Peace and everlaſting honour be upon their heads! Future generations will riſe up and call them bleſſed. Numbers will continue to be animated with ſteady and growing zeal under every diſcouragement, by calling to remembrance their learning and diligence, their piety and ſufferings. It is likewiſe worthy of obſervation, that the people would not permit their miniſters to bear the whole burden. They *eſteemed them very highly in love for their works ſake*, and, notwithſtanding all the terror of penal laws, would attend their preaching, and expoſed themſelves to be fined, plundered, and impriſoned, in ſupport of thoſe who for *conſcience towards God endured grief ſuffering wrongfully*. They gave them the beſt maintenance they were able, often helped them out of priſon, ſupported them under confinement, and through this ſteady attachment and zeal many of them became their companions. The *Corporation-Act* incapacitated them from ſerving in the loweſt offices of truſt, as did the *Teſt-Act* from any places of profit; yet if they were called to any burdenſome employment, their being Nonconformiſts would not avail to excuſe their ſerving.

But

But the worſt grievance of all was the *Conventicle-Act*. By this act, the 25th of *Elizabeth* was declared to be in full force, which condemns all perſons, refuſing peremptorily to come to church after conviction, to baniſhment, and in caſe of return, to death. It further enacts, "that if any perſon above the age of ſixteen, after the 1ſt day of *July* 1664, ſhall be preſent at any meeting, under pretence of any exerciſe of religion, in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the church of England, where ſhall be five or more perſons than the houſehold, above the age of ſixteen, he ſhall for the firſt offence ſuffer three months impriſonment, or pay a ſum not exceeding five pounds; for the ſecond offence, ſix months impriſonment or ten pounds; and for the third offence, be baniſhed to ſome of the American plantations for ſeven years, or pay one hundred pounds, excepting New England and Virginia; and in caſe they return or make their eſcape, ſuch perſons are to be adjudged felons, and ſuffer death without benefit of clergy. Sheriffs or juſtices of the peace, or others commiſſioned by them, are empowered to diſſolve, diſſipate, and break up all unlawful conventicles, and to take into cuſtody ſuch of their number as they ſhall think fit. They who ſuffer ſuch conventicles in their houſes or barns are liable to the ſame forfeitures as other offenders. The proſecution is to be within three months. Married women taken at conventicles, are to be impriſoned for three months, unleſs their huſbands pay forty ſhillings for their redemption."

This was a terrible ſcourge upon the laity, put into the hands of a ſingle juſtice of peace, without the verdict of a jury, the oath of an informer being ſufficient. *Rapin* obſerves, "The deſign "of this parliament was to drive them to deſpair,

" and force them into real crimes againſt the " government." In conſequence of this act, the gaols were quickly filled with diſſenting Proteſtants, whilſt the Papiſts were ſheltered by the court. Some miniſters who went to church in ſermon-time, were diſturbed for preaching to a few after ſervice was over; their houſes were broke open, 20l. levied upon the miniſter, 20l. upon the houſe, 5s. upon each hearer. If the money were not immediately paid, goods were ſeized, or cattle driven away and ſold, often for half the value. When the ſeizure did not anſwer the fine, miniſters and people were hurried to priſon and confined for three or ſix months. The trade of an informer was become ſo very gainful, that numberleſs vile profligate fellows diſperſed themſelves all over the nation, to find out private meetings. But the money got in this way never proſpered, being ſpent in taverns, gaming, and debauchery; moſt of theſe informers died in priſon or poverty; and their vile courſes brought not a few to a miſerable and untimely end. Others however ſtarted up in their room, whilſt the court, and many of the biſhops, puſhed them to do all the michief they could. A few however of the epiſcopal bench preſerved it from utter diſgrace, by manifeſting a truly Chriſtian ſpirit; amongſt whom the moſt eminent was the philoſophical Dr. *Wilkins*, appointed to the ſee of *Cheſter* much againſt the inclination of archbiſhop *Sheldon*, and ſeveral others, whoſe zeal had eaten up their charity.

In the dioceſe of *Saliſbury* the proſecution was hotteſt, inſtigated by biſhop *Ward*, whoſe abilities of head, though truly reſpectable, did not exceed the hardneſs of his heart. Several hundreds were perſecuted with unrelenting ſeverity, and driven from their families and trade, which was more or leſs the caſe in all parts of the kingdom.

Informers

Informers crept into religious aſſemblies diſguiſed, and ſoldiers broke into the houſes of honeſt farmers, under pretence of ſearching for conventicles. The accuſed were plundered of their houſehold furniture, and the ſick having their beds taken from under them, were laid upon the floor. At *Eaſt-Salcomb*, near *Sidmouth* in Devonſhire, Mrs. *Joan Baſton*, a widow, aged and blind, was fined 12l. for a ſuppoſed conventicle, and for non-payment threatned with a gaol. After ſome weeks, the officers broke open her doors, and carried away goods above treble the value of the fine.

The houſes of Sir *John Hartopp*, Mr. *Fleetwood*, and others, at *Stoke-Newington* near London were broken into, and diſtreſſes levied on them for conventicles to the amount of 6 or 7000l. The like was done in other places. Injunctions were ſent out from ſeveral of the biſhops under their ſeals, requiring all church-wardens to preſent ſuch as did not receive the ſacrament at church at Eaſter. For neglect of this many were cited into the ſpiritual courts, where if they failed to appear, excommunication followed, unleſs prevented by ſome powerful bribe.

Mr. *Thompſon*, a miniſter at Briſtol, was apprehended on the corporation-act, and refuſing to take the *Oxford-oath*, was committed to priſon. Being ſeized with a fever through the noiſomeneſs of the place, a phyſician adviſed his removal, and a bond of 500l. was offered the ſheriff for his ſecurity. Application alſo was made to the biſhop, but without ſucceſs; ſo that he died in priſon, declaring he ſhould not have complied even if he had foreſeen the conſequences. At *Newcaſtle* about twenty young men met once a week, for mutual aſſiſtance and improvement in religion, by prayer and conference. Theſe being informed againſt by one of their members, were thrown

into a gaol and confined a year, to the ſurpriſe of the whole town. A bill, charging them with *high-treaſon* was drawn up, and ſuch a jury procured as would have brought them in guilty. But *Charles* II. dying before the next aſſizes, they were called to the bar and ſet at liberty; judge *Jefferies* telling them, that a new king coming to the throne had ſaved all their lives.

During that dreadful plague in 1665, which cut off 100,000 of the Londoners, by eight or ten thouſand in a week (though the city was not near ſo populous as at preſent) moſt of the eſtabliſhed clergy, except a few worthy men, deſerted their pariſhes at a time when their aſſiſtance was moſt wanted, ſuch multitudes ſtanding in need of every conſolation religion could afford. The Nonconformiſt divines were then truly vigilant, and ventured at this calamitious ſeaſon, to preach in the vacant pulpits, imagining the deplorable ſtate of their fellow-citizens would be reckoned a full juſtification. They boldly faced death when its arrows flew thick on every ſide; numbers who attended divine worſhip one day being thrown into their graves by cart loads the next. The meeting of ſuch large bodies of people, probably tended to ſpread the infection. Theſe miniſters, in ſuch a ſituation, ſhewed that they were actuated by the moſt diſintereſted zeal. And yet—aſtoniſhing to relate! the *Five-mile-act* was paſſed at this very time by the parliament, then aſſembled at *Oxford*, on account of the plague, for which reaſon it was called the *Oxford-Act*, whereby theſe good men, thus hazarding their lives for the good of ſouls, were to be baniſhed from the city and driven into ſilence, as well as ſeparated from their friends.

The plague was ſucceeded by the dreadful fire of London, when moſt of the churches being burnt,

burnt, the Nonconformiſts fitted up places for public worſhip, and were attended by crowded audiences. Their ſufferings excited pity, and their labours reſpect, ſo that their adherents viſibly increaſed at this alarming period.

In the year 1671, *Charles*, with an evident view to favour the Papiſts, publiſhed his *Declaration for Liberty of Conſcience*, delivering Nonconformiſts from all penal laws, and granting them licence to open meeting-houſes. This was done without conſent of parliament, which the Nonconformiſts did by no means approve, being far from deſirous of obtaining liberty in this way. Some harſhly cenſured them for accepting it at all, the ſovereign having no power to diſpenſe with the laws of the land. To this objection it appeared a ſufficient anſwer,—that liberty of conſcience being their natural right, no power on earth could juſtly deprive them of it; that all ſuch laws are in themſelves null and void; and that a man is culpable who neglects *any* favourable opportunity of promoting what appears to him the cauſe of truth. Thoſe who reproached Nonconformiſts for availing themſelves of the royal diſpenſation, would very probably have charged them with perverſeneſs and obſtinacy had they refuſed ſo to do.

Dr. *Stillingfleet*, who before the church became triumphant, had publiſhed his *Irenicum* (an excellent work in behalf of religious moderation) now propagated a report highly injurious to the Diſſenters. The heads of the party were accuſed of having received ſmall penſions from the court, bribing them to be ſilent and to join intereſt with the Papiſts. Dr. *Owen* declared in print, "That this was ſuch a frontleſs malicious lie, as impudence itſelf would bluſh at, and that the Diſſenters however traduced, were ready to give the higheſt ſecurity that could be of their ſtability in the Proteſtant

ſtant cauſe. Could any man of common ſenſe really imagine, that thoſe who had given up their livings, refuſed biſhoprics, and ſubmitted to the moſt cruel oppreſſion for conſcience-ſake, would ſacrifice their integrity to a paltry bribe, and aſſiſt a party whoſe influence they dreaded to a moſt exceſſive degree?

The king's indulgence ſerved as a protection till 1681, when being recalled, the perſecution was renewed with the utmoſt fury. *Charles* had not the leaſt regard for religion any further than as an engine of ſtate. If any thing, he was a Papiſt; Popiſh principles being beſt adapted to his licentious conduct and arbitrary views. He vented his indignation however, ſometimes with no ſmall acrimony, againſt thoſe high-prieſts, who urged the execution of the violent acts they had procured, to haraſs the ſcrupulouſly conſcientious, whilſt they appeared to have no conſciences of their own. Dr. *Burnet* obſerves, "The king was highly diſpleaſed at the behaviour of moſt of the biſhops: and he took occaſion to ſhew it at the council-board. Upon the complaints that were made of ſome diſorders and of ſome conventicles, he ſaid the clergy were chiefly to blame for theſe diſorders; for if they had lived well, and had gone about their pariſhes, and had taken pains to convince the Nonconformiſts, the nation might have been by that time well ſettled. But they thought of nothing but to get good benefices and to keep a good table. This I read (ſays he) in a letter that Sir *R. Murray* writ down to Scotland: and it agrees well with a converſation that the king was pleaſed to have with myſelf once, when I was alone with him in his cloſet. While we were talking of the ill ſtate the church was in, I was ſtruck to hear a prince of his courſe of life ſo much diſguſted at the ambition, coveteouſneſs, and the

the ſcandals of the clergy. He ſaid, if the clergy had done their part, it had been an eaſy matter to run down the Nonconformiſts: but, he added, they will do nothing, and will have me do every thing; and moſt of them do worſe than if they did nothing." They were ready enough to perſecute, as it gratified their pride and revenge; but to conciliate their fellow Chriſtians, and win them over by gentle means, required the exerciſe of virtues not ſo congenial to the minds of political religioniſts and hard-hearted bigots.

Among thoſe who died in priſon in this reign, muſt be mentioned the two following, as deſerving particular notice. Mr. *Wm. Jenkyn* was a deſcendant of Mr. *Roger*'s, the protomartyr in Q. *Mary*'s days. His father, a miniſter who endured much perſecution, died when he was a child. His public ſervices were very acceptable at his firſt entrance upon life, but being a ſtaunch friend to monarchy, he was ſuſpended and impriſoned by thoſe who ſeized the government on the death of *Charles* I. On the Reſtoration, being ejected from the living of *Chriſt-Church*, and the lectureſhip of *Black-Friars*, London, he preached as opportunity offered till September 1684. Being then in company with the excellent Mr. *Flavel* and others, engaged at their devotions on a faſt-day, where they thought themſelves out of danger, the ſoldiers broke in upon them, and ſeized Mr. *Jenkyn*, the other miniſters eſcaping. Being carried before two aldermen, they treated him very rudely, and on his refuſing to take the *Oxford-oath*, committed him to Newgate, rejecting his offer of a 40*l.* fine, which the law empowered them to take, though it was urged that the air of Newgate would certainly ſuffocate him. He ſent a petition to the king for a releaſe, which was backed by an aſſurance from his phyſicians, that his life appeared in

in danger through cloſe impriſonment. The anſwer was "Jenkyn ſhall be a priſoner as long as he lives;" and the keepers received orders not to let him pray with any viſitants, even his own daughter. He ſoon began to decline in health, but remained full of comfort and joy, and died *January* 19, 1685, aged 72, after four months confinement in Newgate, where he truly ſaid, "A man might be as effectually murdered as at Tyburn." A nobleman hearing of his happy releaſe, told King *Charles*, "*Jenkyn* has obtained his liberty;" on which he aſked with eagerneſs "Aye, who gave it him?" The nobleman replied,—"A greater than your majeſty, the King of kings:" at which Charles appeared deeply ſtricken and remained ſilent. This confeſſor was buried by his friends with due honour in *Bunhill-Fields*, under a tombſtone with a Latin inſcription.

Mr. *Delaune*, a Baptiſt ſchool-maſter of conſiderable parts and learning, drew up *A plea for the Nonconformiſts*, ſhewing the ſtate of their caſe and juſtifying their ſeparation. This piece was written in anſwer to a ſermon publiſhed by Dr. *Ben. Calamy*, who had conformed, and dedicated in a complimentary ſtrain to the infamous Jefferies. The ſubject of this diſcourſe was a *ſcrupulous conſcience*. And it appeared not as a bare attack on the Diſſenters, but as a direct challenge. Mr. *Delaune*, before the publication of his anſwer, was apprehended and ſhut up cloſe priſoner in Newgate. From hence he writes to Dr. *Calamy*, deſiring him to procure his enlargement, and his ſheets, yet unfiniſhed, a public paſſport, alleging,—"that they contained nothing, but a fair examination of what his ſermon invited him to, and if wrong he would fain be convinced by ſomething more like divinity than *Newgate*." The doctor at firſt promiſed to ſhew any kindneſs that became

became him, but afterwards evaded making interceſſion on his behalf, and refuſed to perform the office of a divine, by viſiting him in priſon, and arguing the points for which he ſuffered. The only method adopted to convince Mr. *Delaune* of his error was—a proſecution for a ſcandalous and ſeditious libel, and his ſentence,—"To pay a fine of one hundred marks, to be kept priſoner till he paid it, to find ſecurity for his good behaviour for one year, and his books to be burned before the Royal-Exchange." The court profeſſing to be very merciful, told him, "That in reſpect of his being a ſcholar, he ſhould not be pilloried though he deſerved it." His confinement deprived him of his livelihood, and the expences of the proſecution rendered him unable to pay his fine, or to ſupport his family, conſiſting of a wife and two ſmall children. They having no means of ſubſiſtence at home, became his companions in priſon. Through ſorrow and ſickneſs, brought on by cloſe confinement, and want of neceſſaries, they all three of them died. Nor did he himſelf long ſurvive. For fifteen months he endured great hardſhips from extreme poverty, the contribution of friends being inſufficient for the ſupport of him and his family, whoſe ſufferings aggravated his own. He bore them however with manly and Chriſtian firmneſs; but through want of air and exerciſe his health declined, and he at length ſunk under the weight of his complicated ſorrows.—"Such was the tragical end in a Proteſtant country of *Thomas Delaune!* a worthy, pious, learned, and ingenious man, who had been guilty of no other crime than defending his religious principles, when attacked with abuſe and miſrepreſentation."

There were martyrs to civil as well as to religious liberty during the courſe of this reign. Shameful encroachments were made on the rights of

of the people, and the charters under various pretences taken away from moſt of the corporations, that the election of a Houſe of Commons might be veſted in the court. Unreaſonable and exceſſive fines to the amount of 100,000l. on an individual were laid, to deter perſons poſſeſſing the largeſt property from even converſing about political affairs. Mr. *Locke*, whoſe writings have done ſuch honour to his country, was driven into exile; and Dr. *Burnet*, whom no offers of preferment could ſeduce, found it neceſſary to retire. The excellent lord *Ruſſel* was beheaded, accuſed of being within hearing of ſome treaſonable words, but really for his zeal in endeavouring, by conſtitutional means, to procure the excluſion of the duke of York (afterwards *James* II.) from aſcending the throne. *Algernon Sydney*, another illuſtrious and revered patriot, died alſo on the ſcaffold; againſt whom hardly any thing could be alleged, but that what the court termed a ſeditious libel was found in his ſtudy. Such undaunted champions of freedom, whom nothing could tempt to forſake its banners, were naturally objects of terror to deſpots, who above all things hate men of tried integrity.

The rigour exerciſed againſt Diſſenters, being deſigned to open the way for a toleration in which Papiſts might be included, ſo truly patriotic were the former, that when the *teſt-act* was brought into the Houſe of Commons, which confined all places of profit and truſt to thoſe who took the ſacrament at church, the court-party oppoſed it with all their might, and endeavoured to divide the others, by artfully propoſing that ſome regard might be had to Proteſtant Diſſenters, hoping thus to clog the bill and get it thrown out. Hereupon alderman *Love*, a Diſſenter and a member for London, ſtood up and ſaid, "He hoped "the clauſe in favour of Diſſenters would occa-

"ſion

"ſion no intemperate heats, and therefore wiſhed "that, ſince this was a conſiderable bar againſt "Popery, the bill might paſs without any altera- "tion, and that nothing might interpoſe till it "was finiſhed. Then we will try if the parlia- "ment will not diſtinguiſh us from Popiſh "recuſants, by ſome marks of their favour; but "we are willing to lie under the ſeverities of the "law for a time, rather than clog a more neceſ- "ſary work with our concerns." Theſe being the ſentiments of the leading Diſſenters, both in the houſe and without, the bill eaſily paſſed the commons, and became a law.

This conduct of the Diſſenters at that time, proceeding from a diſintereſted love of their country, has been cenſured by ſome, becauſe unfavourable to general liberty. But however harmleſs Popery may now be in Britain, and however deſirable that all penal ſtatutes were aboliſhed, and every diſqualification removed, the caſe was quite different in the laſt century. The Roman Catholics at that time almoſt univerſally held, and acted upon, that infamous principle, "that oaths were not to be kept with heretics." There were perſons yet living, whoſe parents had ſeen the fires kindled by bloody *Mary*, and the cruel Iriſh maſſacre remained freſh in the memory of all. The ſpirit of perſecution raged violently in France, and manifeſted itſelf dreadfully in every country where the Papiſts acted without reſtraint. For theſe reaſons only (not to mention the leading doctrines and practices of Popery) nothing could exceed the terrors of all denominations of Proteſtants, on the poſſibility of its regaining the aſcendency here.

The profanation of a ſacred ordinance, by rendering it a qualification for a civil office, was an objection hardly thought of at that time, obvious as it now appears. The act propoſed, appeared the

beſt ſecurity that could be obtained againſt a formidable enemy to the country at large, and though it bore hard upon many conſcientious Diſſenters, yet they preferred the intereſt of the whole community to their own. If they erred, it was an error on the ſide of honour and generoſity, and conſidering the ideas then prevalent, their conduct ſo far from deſerving reproach, merits the applauſe of every ſucceeding generation.

The *Teſt-act*, at that time yielded ſome ſecurity to the Proteſtant intereſt. But if for this reaſon it were juſtifiable *then* (a point not to be readily conceded) it ought to be now repealed. In Great-Britain the number of Catholics is ſo ſmall, that nothing can be feared from their exertions. Beſides, a large part of them concur with thoſe in Ireland, who, according to the report of the committee at Dublin, "Have abjured in the moſt "explicit manner, the ſupremacy and infallibility of "the pope, and ſolemnly diſclaimed imputations of "every opinion and practice, religious, political, "or moral, that can have any tendency prejudi-"cial to individuals of any denomination, the "intereſt of Proteſtantiſm, or the conſtitution of "their country." Had all thoſe communities which left the church of Rome relied more on Divine Providence and leſs on civil policy, they would better have conſulted the credit of the reformation, and more effectually ſoftened the prejudices of thoſe who adhered to their ancient faith.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

CHARLES II. dying in *Feb.* 1685. *James* his brother aſcended the throne; who being a Papiſt himſelf, was naturally diſpoſed to ſecure thoſe of his own religion from penal ſtatutes. The better to accompliſh this, a declaration was iſſued for a general liberty of conſcience to perſons of all perſuaſions whatſoever. The following year it was rendered more advantageous to the Papiſts, and ordered to be read in all churches and chapels both in England and Wales. By this declaration Diſſenters were not only freed from perſecution, but likewiſe admitted to ſerve in all offices of truſt and profit. They were very thankful for this liberty, but could by no means approve of the *diſpenſing power*. At a meeting of the London miniſters, Mr. *Howe* condemned it, and Dr. *Williams* ſaid, "He had rather, for his part, loſe his "liberty and return to his former bondage, than "declare for it." On ſumming up the debate, it was agreed to ſignify to the courtiers, that ſuch was the general opinion; at which the king was exceedingly diſappointed. There were, however, thoſe who came with addreſſes full of high commendations. In theſe they expreſſed their humble dependence on his majeſty to ſecure their rights and properties, but made no promiſes of unreſerved obedience. Some few ſpoke in higher ſtrains than the elder and more cautious miniſters approved; but biſhop *Burnet* admits, that thoſe who carried up addreſſes of this ſort were mean and inconſiderable. Certain individuals, from an exceſs of joy, or ſtrong reſentment againſt their perſecutors, too much countenanced the royal wiſhes; but the body of Diſſenters kept at a diſtance; of whom lord *Halifax* ſaid, "as thankful as they were for their liberty, they were fearful

of the iſſue; neither can any number of conſideration amongſt them be charged with hazarding the public ſafety, by falling in with the meaſures of the court, of which they had as great a dread as their neighbours." The king intimated to the lord-mayor of London, who was a Diſſenter, that he might uſe his own mode of worſhip in the mayoralty-chapel; which he prudently declined, as it would have formed a precedent the next year for a Papiſt if in that office. This refuſal put James into an ill humour, and he complained of the Diſſenters as a perverſe ſet of people, whom it was impoſſible to pleaſe. But ſurely they acted worthily and honourably in ſacrificing both reſentment and emolument to the laws and conſtitution, a ſteady adherence to which has ever been their diſtinguiſhed characteriſtic, though it conſequently expoſed them to the hatred and calumny of all the advocates for arbitrary power.

It was not in affairs of religion only, or in order to protect a favourite party, that James aimed at making his own will the law. He attempted, without the aid of parliamentary authority, to reign ſole maſter over the property and perſons of Britons; and the ſpeedy ſuppreſſion of the raſh and ill concerted attempt of the duke of *Monmouth*, encouraged him to proceed with the moſt undiſguiſed boldneſs. The barbarities inflicted, with his full approbation, on the partizans of that unhappy man, he thought would have effectually terrified all thoſe who dared to oppoſe his will. But in the moſt dangerous times ſome individuals of this country have diſplayed a ſpirit ſuperior to all fear. Dr. *Samuel Johnſon*, a clergyman of unblemiſhed reputation, publiſhed a ſeaſonable *Addreſs to the Army*, warning them againſt being made tools to ſubvert the religion and liberties of their fellow-ſubjects. He was degraded, impriſoned, fined,

fined, and cruelly whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. Yet he ſtill perſevered in oppoſing court-meaſures tending to enſlave the nation.

The eſtabliſhed clergy, almoſt without exception, preached up paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, whilſt ſucceſſive monarchs were aſpiring to abſolute dominion. St. Paul's exhortation, *Rom.* xiii. recommending ſubjection to the higher powers, becauſe they were *ordained of God*, was urged, as if not only the order of government, but every particular magiſtrate was of divine appointment. Is it not however moſt abſurd to imagine, that the Great Being who governs the world in righteouſneſs, would command his rational offſpring to obey tyrants and oppreſſors? Becauſe men owe ſubmiſſion to ſuch as are *miniſters for good*, muſt they alſo ſubmit to thoſe who are only the miniſters of evil? The people at large muſt judge what meaſures are calculated to promote their welfare. Though the advocates for tyranny will declaim about the danger of this, the whole tenor of hiſtory proves, that the body of the people in every country, ſo far from being prone to ſedition, cannot without much difficulty be rouzed to vindicate their rights, and have generally ſuffered a deprivation of one privilege after another, till reduced to a ſtate of abject ſlavery. Subordination to law is abſolutely eſſential to human felicity; and it is a mark of ſound ſenſe, as well as true religion, to behave reſpectively to civil governors, and to lend a cheerful ſupport to every juſt meaſure of men in power, always carefully refraining from a captious diſpoſition to cenſure. But oppoſing bad governors is quite a different thing from deſtroying government, and though prudence may dictate a ſilent ſubmiſſion to the worſt, yet as ſoon as Providence points out the way to a people of obtaining deliverance, duty to themſelves and to poſterity loudly calls to ſeize the glorious opportunity.

Under the *Stuarts*, abſolute paſſive obedience, not to the *law*, but to the will of the reigning prince, was the thing inſiſted on: even a Tillotſon urged this doctrine on lord *Ruſſel*, juſt before his death, and the duke of *Monmouth* was preſſed on the ſcaffold to acknowledge its truth as eſſential to ſalvation. Men were taught patiently to behold their deareſt rights trampled upon, and apply for relief only by prayers and tears, to which deſpots are known to be cruelly inattentive. Whilſt a vaſt majority of the clergy preached unlimited ſubmiſſion to tyranny, it is no wonder that ſome were real abetters and ſupporters of it. Inſiſting on reading the declaration for liberty of conſcience in the churches cauſed the firſt appearance of oppoſition. Seven biſhops petitioned the king againſt it, whoſe impriſonment excited general diſcontent, whilſt an atempt to encroach upon the privileges of the univerſity of *Oxford* cauſed even the members of that violently loyal ſeminary to form a league againſt arbitrary power. James little expected this, conſidering a decree paſſed there five years before, explicitly and fully approving the moſt ſlaviſh principles that could poſſibly be advanced.

The clergy feeling themſelves oppreſſed, thought the yoke inſufferable, and looking every where for help, applied in their extremity to the *Diſſenters*, with profeſſions of regret for their paſt conduct; and very ſolemn aſſurances of the greateſt favour and lenity in better times. Malice itſelf cannot deny, that the Diſſenters ſhewed all readineſs to join the church againſt Popery, their common enemy. Had they through reſentment, on account of paſt injuries, or the hope of conciliating royal favour, ſtood neuter, James would have gained his point; but they warmly concurred, even with their perſecutors, in what concerned the national

tional welfare, and a deliverance was wonderfully effected.

When Popery was making rapid advances, divers of the clergy wrote admirably well againſt its peculiar doctrines, and ſome cenſured the Diſſenters as not contributing their ſhare. But they certainly took the lead in their *Morning exerciſes* againſt Popery. Several wrote againſt its errors through the whole reign of *Charles* II. and, which was a ſtronger proof of zeal, ſtood in the gap and expoſed themſelves to perſecution leſt it ſhould prevail. Beſides, theſe miniſters had been impriſoned, driven from their homes, plundered of their books, and therefore could not be prepared to publiſh like thoſe who enjoyed perfect eaſe. Some however, even thus unfavourably circumſtanced, did write; but their tracts, under a pretence of being too warm, were refuſed a licence. How unreaſonably were they upbraided for not doing, what ſuch various circumſtances concurred to prevent. They have alſo been abſurdly reproached for writing only on *theological ſubjects*; yet theſe ſurely required their chief attention; and haraſſed in the manner they were, their valuable works on divinity ſhewed a ſtrong attachment to ſtudy. Had they lived unmoleſted, the world might have been improved on general ſubjects, as it was in a few inſtances, by the productions of their literary leiſure. Deep, ſolid, and extenſive learning, not a few of them undeniably poſſeſſed.

It is impoſſible to make an exact computation of the number of ſufferers, or of the damages ſuſtained by the Diſſenters in the ſpace of twenty-five years, under the reigns of *Charles* II. and *James* II. How many families were reduced to beggary; how many lives were loſt in loathſome gaols; how many paſtors were driven from their congregations, and forced to live as they could five miles from them

or

or from any corporation; how many induſtrious tradeſmen were cut off from their employments, their ſubſtance plundered by rude ſoldiers, and divided amongſt idle, infamous informers. The vexatious ſuits in ſpiritual courts alſo, and the expences attending them were immenſe. One writer, quoted in the preface to *Delaune's Plea*, ſays, "That near *eight thouſand* periſhed in priſon during the reign of *Charles* II. merely for diſſenting "from the church in ſome points, which they "were able to give good reaſon for; and that "within the compaſs of three years, they ſuffered "in their trades and eſtates at leaſt *two millions*."

Mr. *Jeremy White* had carefully collected a liſt of the diſſenting miniſters and their ſufferings; with the names of *ſixty thouſand* perſons, who had ſuffered on a religious account, between the Reſtoration and the Revolution, *five thouſand* of whom died in priſon. King *James* offered him a thouſand guineas for this manuſcript, but he reſolved to conceal it, that it might not appear to the diſreputation of the church of England when in real danger. For this generous conduct ſome of the clergy thanked him, with the offer of an acknowledgment, which he to his further honour declined accepting, though not in affluent circumſtances.

Beſides thoſe who ſuffered at home, multitudes retired to Holland and America. Reckoning the diſſenting families at that time in England to be no more than 150,000 (no extravagant computation) and that each family incurred the loſs of three or four pounds *per ann.* the whole will amount to twelve or fourteen millions; a prodigious ſum for theſe times! "But theſe, adds Mr. *Neal*, are bear conjectures. The damage done to the trade and property of the nation was immenſe, and the wounds made in the eſtates of private families were deep and large, many of whom to my certain

certain knowledge wear the ſcars of them to this day."

The loſs of ſuch as emigrated was in ſome degree ſupplied by the many induſtrious Proteſtant refugees, of whom the abominable cruelties of *Louis* XIV. and his clergy, drove from *France*, merely on account of their religion, ſince their loyalty was unimpeached. King *James*, though a bigot, yet from political motives encouraged theſe valuable members of ſociety to ſettle in his dominions, which they enriched by the introduction of their manufactories, and improved by their virtuous examples.

When the Nonconformiſts roſe up into view as a diſtinct body, their long ſufferings had not materially diminiſhed their numbers. This may be imputed—to their firmneſs and conſtancy, clearly proving that they were governed not by humour but by principle:— to their doctrine and manner of preaching, which was evangelical, plain, and practical, accompanied with warm addreſſes to the conſcience:—to the ſeverity of their morals, at a time when all kinds of vice and profaneneſs were countenanced by the court:—to their ſtrict obſervation of the Lord's-day, family prayer, and other religious duties:—to a careful and ſtrict education of their children, eſpecially by catechiſing:—to their concern for a ſucceſſion of learned and able miniſters; with which view they encouraged private academies; and it is worthy of mention, ſeveral gentlemen and rich citizens devoted their children to the miniſtry, when they had little in view but bonds and impriſonment.—The perſecuting zeal alſo of the high-church party, accompanied with a ſhameful licentiouſneſs of manners, had the ſame tendency. The ſight of men groſsly immoral, who ſcarcely worſhipped God at all, perſecuting thoſe who ſerved him according to their conſciences, naturally

naturally inclined the hearts of many to eſpouſe the cauſe of the ſufferers.—Finally, as the ſpirit and principles of the Tories began to appear ruinous to the nation, the ſufferings of thoſe who had ever been friends to the old conſtitution, gave them reputation with ſincere lovers of their country, divers of whom appeared in their behalf, and joined their congregations. Some perſecutors themſelves, weary of the buſineſs, deſerted the cauſe, and which is very remarkable, inſtances occurred of miniſters poſſeſſing preferment in the eſtabliſhment who quitted it even in the worſt times, declaring that a perſecuting church could never be a true one, and therefore took up their lot with the oppreſſed party.

The behaviour of the court-lawyers, particularly the infamous *Judge Jefferies*, on the trials of ſuch as were obnoxious to the ruling powers, cannot be peruſed without ſtrong indignation by any ſenſible Briton. The proceedings againſt the celebrated Quakers *Penn* and *Mead*, with their manly deportment; the vile meaſures adopted to convict the learned Mr. *Roſewell* of high-treaſon, and the brutal violence uſed towards the venerable Mr. *Baxter*, are well worthy of being peruſed. Particularly to recount them here would occupy too large a ſpace. The lives of thoſe renowned confeſſors *Penn* and *Baxter*, with a full account of their trials, are admirably well drawn up in the *Britiſh Biography*, vol. vi. vii.

Mr. *Robert Mayor* of Oxford, a pious Conformiſt, who had devoted his eſtate to charitable uſes, gave by his laſt will ſix hundred pounds, to be diſtributed by Mr. *Baxter* to ſixty poor ejected miniſters, adding, "That he did it not becauſe they "were Nonconformiſts, but becauſe many ſuch "were poor and pious." For this legacy the king's attorney Sir *R. Sawyer* ſued in the chancery, and

and the lord keeper *North* decreed it all to the king. It was paid into the chancery by order, and, as Providence directed, was there kept ſafe till after the Revolution, when the commiſſioners of the great ſeal reſtored it to the uſe for which it was intended by the deceaſed, and Mr. *Baxter* diſpoſed of it accordingly. Haraſſed as the ejected miniſters were in ſuch a variety of ways, it was obſerved by one when far advanced in life, "That though "many were brought very low, had large families, "and few friends at all able to ſupport them, he "never heard of a ſingle Nonconformiſt miniſter "in priſon for debt." Dr. *Edmund Calamy* with much induſtry collected various intereſting particulars relating to them, an improved edition of which, entitled *The Nonconformiſts Memorial*, was publiſhed in 2 vols. 8vo. by Mr. *Samuel Palmer*, 1775. By their commendable and well beſtowed labours the memories of theſe pious worthies will be long preſerved, animating each riſing age to a ſacred love of liberty.

James, by his violent, illegal proceedings, excited the fears of all ranks of men; which were not a little increaſed by the appearance of a male heir, with ſuch ſuſpicious circumſtances as rendered it highly probable that this ſon was not his own, but adopted as ſuch to perpetuate the civil and religious ſyſtem he wiſhed to eſtabliſh. A ſpirited oppoſition then became neceſſary. The prince of *Orange*, who had married *Mary* his eldeſt daughter, was by ſome undaunted patriots invited over to reſcue this country from Popery and ſlavery, which he had been the bleſſed inſtrument of effecting with reſpect to his own, againſt the wicked attempts of *Louis* XIV. He landed at *Torbay*, *Nov.* 4, 1688. At firſt the nobility and gentry were rather backward in reſorting to him, but in a little while he was joined by ſome of the king's principal

principal favourites; and even his own daughter *Anne* with prince *George* of Denmark her huſband. *James* fearful of what might befall him, took refuge in *France*, and the throne being declared vacant, was filled by the election of the prince and princeſs of *Orange*. Thus that GLORIOUS REVOLUTION was wonderfully accompliſhed, which more clearly aſcertained the rights of Britons, and fixed their liberties on a firmer foundation than ever. To this joyful event the *Diſſenters* moſt heartily contributed, and to true REVOLUTION-PRINCIPLES they have conſtantly remained firm and ſteady.

William and *Mary* being thus ſeated on the throne, ſome divines of diſtinguiſhed worth and eminence in the church, recollecting their promiſes made in a ſeaſon of danger, formed the plan of a religious COMPREHENSION. Such alterations were deſigned to be made in the public ſervices, as would not only have been in themſelves material improvements, but brought a large majority of the Diſſenters, who had confeſſedly deſerved well from the true friends to the eſtabliſhment, within its pale. This ſcheme being highly approved by the king and queen, and preſſed with earneſtneſs by many temporal peers, it was intended that a commiſſion ſhould be iſſued to a ſelect body of diſtinguiſhed clergy and laymen, who might form a plan and propoſe it to parliament. Unfortunately, biſhop *Burnet*, a real friend to the deſign, imagining it would meet with more general acceptance if left to the *Convocation*, urged this plan, and his arguments prevailed. He afterwards made this free acknowledgment, "I was con-
"vinced ſoon after that I had taken wrong mea-
"ſures, all their promiſes were entirely forgot.
"The clergy began to ſhew an implacable hatred to
"the Nonconformiſts, and ſeemed to wiſh for an
"occaſion

"occaſion to renew old ſeverities againſt them." They ſeemed to think, like the Papiſts, that oaths with heretics or ſchiſmatics are not binding. Inſtead of ſhewing a willingneſs to make the ſmalleſt alterations, they voted a reſolution not to enter into any debates on the ſubject. Thus has the church of England rewarded the Diſſenters, though twice reſcued from the moſt eminent danger by their means.—In 1660, the Preſbyterians reſtored the king and conſtitution, neglecting to make any terms for themſelves; and at the Revolution the church fled for ſuccour to a Preſbyterian prince, who together with fourteen thouſand Hollanders of the ſame principles, and the warm concurrence of that party here, fixed it on a firm foundation, and yet the clergy would yield nothing in their favour.

King William was a firm friend to religious liberty, and had ever expreſſed the ſtrongeſt averſion from any thing like perſecution on account of doctrines merely ſpeculative, and not connected with civil affairs. It was his wiſh that the *Teſt-act*, as far as it operated againſt any whoſe oaths could be regarded as a ſecurity to government, might be repealed. The city of London alſo manifeſted a ſincere good will and truly Chriſtian liberality towards their brother Proteſtants, and a petition was preſented to the Houſe of Commons, from the common-council, on the 25th of *June* 1689, praying that "Our moſt gracious king may be freed, from all reſtraints of uſing his Proteſtant ſubjects indifferently in his military or civil ſervices; according to their ſeveral qualities and abilities, wherewith God Almighty, nature, education, and experience have endowed them, to that very end that they might be uſeful to their king and country, and therein ſerve God in their generation."

But the deſire of the king, though thus ſupported by the citizens of the metropolis, and favoured by many temporal as well as ſome ſpiritual peers, and alſo by the firmeſt upholders of the new government in the lower houſe, could not procure this renewal of their civil rights to that part of the community who had joined ſo heartily in the glorious revolution.

One important point however was gained. An *Act of Toleration* was paſſed in 1690, which, according to the confined ideas of religious freedom then entertained, relieved the great body of Nonconformiſts very materially. Yet the liberty granted of worſhipping God in the way moſt agreeable to their conſciences, was envied them by no ſmall party, and thoſe ſeverities continually put in practice againſt which the act of toleration afforded no effectual relief. Several were haraſſed in all parts of the kingdom with tedious and expenſive proſecutions, for undertaking the inſtruction of youth, and obliged at conſiderable coſt to procure prohibitions in the court of King's-Bench againſt the oppreſſions of eccleſiaſtical courts.

Being excluded by their religious principles from the univerſities, the education of their youth for the miniſtry required ſeminaries of their own. But the tutors in them, as well as private ſchoolmaſters, frequently met with cruel treatment. Mr. *Frankland*, a tutor of eminent learning and worth in the North, was excommunicated. The king expreſſed his diſlike of ſuch proſecutions, but he could not prevent their commencement, though he had a power to ſtop their proceeding. This inclination to favour the oppreſſed amongſt his moſt loyal ſubjects drew on him the anger of a large and powerful party. Had he deſtroyed the church of England inſtead of ſaving it, he could not have been more bitterly hated than he was by

thoſe

thoſe who arrogated to themſelves the title of its only true, or moſt faithful ſons. For conſenting to aboliſh epiſcopacy in *Scotland*, he was moſt abſurdly blamed, ſince ſo far as he concurred, it aroſe from neceſſity and not from choice. The Preſbyterian form of government was adopted in *Scotland* at the Reformation, and biſhops were afterwards reſtored ſorely againſt the general will of the nation. *William* however was diſpoſed to continue the epiſcopal form, granting a full toleration to the Preſbyterians; but the biſhops and their adherents continued ſo zealouſly attached to king *James*, and all the friends to the new ſettlement in the ſtate making a point of reſtoring the Preſbyterian diſcipline, it could not be expected that he ſhould reſiſt the wiſhes of a majority, devoted to his cauſe, in order to gratify a minority of avowed enemies. Epiſcopacy was therefore ſet aſide, as contrary to the genius of that church and nation.

In conſequence of the Revolution, a new ſet of Diſſenters from the eſtabliſhment aroſe, deſerving honourable mention. The doctrines of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance had been long zealouſly eſpouſed and defended by almoſt the whole body of the clergy. James's bold attempts to ſubvert every ſacred right of the people cauſed a general alarm; and notwithſtanding what had been ſo long inculcated, "that kings were accountable only to God," great numbers became convinced of their error, and allowed that reſiſtance in ſome caſes was lawful. Others too proud to acknowledge that they had been miſtaken, and yet unwilling to forfeit their preferments, took the oaths required, but with ſecret reſervations, and by the help of thoſe quibbling, evaſive methods, which too often lull men's conſciences aſleep, when they ſacrifice their integrity at the ſhrine of intereſt. Some clergymen of learning, virtue,

and piety, remained diſſaffected, who conſcientiouſly adhering to what they had always taught, and ſtill believed, refuſed taking the oaths. Government was therefore laid under the unhappy neceſſity of depriving ſeveral who were as worthy of the places which they filled in the church as any of their contemporaries. Dr. *Sancroft* archbiſhop of Canterbury, the devout biſhop *Kenn*, and five others of the bench; ſeveral learned dignitaries, and worthy miniſters, reſigned their preferments, and ſcrupling to join in the public prayers for a king whom their principles unavoidably led them to regard as an uſurper, they formed ſeparate aſſemblies, ſtyling themſelves indeed the true church of England, and condemning all thoſe who ſubmitted to the revolution government, as departing from one of its diſtinguiſhing and moſt eſſential doctrines. They were named *Nonjurors*, and for a while formed a conſiderable party, being joined to thoſe of the laity who adhered to the doctrine their public teachers had ſtrenuouſly enforced. The pious Mr. *Nelſon*, whoſe writings are ſtill held in high eſteem, eſpecially by the ſerious members of the national church, thought it his duty to hold communion with the deprived clergy. He conſulted archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, a ſteady friend to king *William*, with regard to the practice of thoſe Nonjurors, who frequented the churches, and yet profeſſed that they did not join in the prayers for their majeſties. His grace moſt heartily wiſhed all to be inwardly perſuaded of the lawfulneſs of it, but by no means approving the ſacrificing of conſcience to convenience, replied, — "As to the caſe you put, I wonder men ſhould be ſo divided in opinion about it. I think it plain that no man can join in prayers, in which there is any petition, which he is verily perſuaded is ſinful. I cannot endure a trick any where, much leſs in religion."

Great

Great diſgrace indeed was brought upon Chriſtianity by thoſe who ſtill maintained the doctrines ſo utterly inconſiſtent with the Revolution, and yet took the oaths and joined in the prayers appointed by the new government. Infidelity increaſed, as it ever will amongſt the unthinking, or thoſe who ſeek for ſomething plauſible to juſtify their unbelief, by this inconſiſtent prevaricating conduct of a large majority of the prieſthood, ſubmitting to perjury rather than to deprivation. The Nonjurors, though of narrow ſentiments and ſtrongly attached to outward forms and ceremonies, which, if they could plead antiquity, had no foundation in ſcripture, were, on account of their integrity, and the ſacrifices which they made to principle, deſerving of warm approbation, and their examples together with thoſe of the ejected miniſters, helped to convince the thoughtful, that however numbers even amongſt divines, might be drawn aſide by the temptations of the world, there were not a few who regarded religion as the pearl of great price.—The Nonjurors became extinct in a courſe of years, but will ever be remembered with reſpect by thoſe upright minds, who, on whatever points they differ, will be unanimous in this, that Chriſtians, like their great Maſter, ſhould be without guile.

Queen *Mary*, whoſe virtues have been the ſubject of warm panegyric, died ſome years before her huſband, who left the world in 1701, to the exceſſive joy of the enemies to the liberty and toleration; but the friends of mankind felt very different ſenſations, and though not blind to ſome errors will ſtill peruſe his hiſtory with applauſe. One of the laſt acts of his life and reign was with a view to ſecure our religion and liberties by a parliamentary ſettlement of the crown on the houſe of HANOVER, the neareſt Proteſtant heirs. The exertions of Sir

Thomas Abney, then lord-mayor of London, and a hearty Diſſenter, contributed materially towards accompliſhing this deſirable and happy event.

Thus have we given a conciſe view of the leading facts in the hiſtory of the *Puritans*, and their ſucceſſors the Nonconformiſts, afterwards more generally called Diſſenters, including the three principal denominations, Preſbyterians, Independents, and Baptiſts, during the period propoſed—from the Reformation to the Revolution. It is the author's deſign, in a future work, if this ſhould meet with encouragement, to bring down their hiſtory to the preſent time. He will therefore here take only a very brief notice of what was moſt remarkable in the ſucceeding reigns.

In that of "the good queen *Anne*," as ſhe has often been ſtyled, the Diſſenters at firſt enjoyed liberty and peace, though the high-church party diſcovered a diſpoſition to renew their former perſecutions. She manifeſted, however, great partiality to the church, which the enemies of liberty rendered ſubſervient to their own evil deſigns, ſo as to make encroachments on the *Toleration-act*, and had ſhe lived a little longer, the Diſſenters would in all probability have been deprived of their right of voting for members of parliament, as well as the liberty of educating their own children, a bill having actually paſſed for that purpoſe, called the *ſchiſm-bill*, which was to have taken place the very day of the queen's death: a moſt ſeaſonable event for the Diſſenters, and the nation at large; for had it not been for this, the *Hanover* ſucceſſion would never have taken place, which the Diſſenters promoted with uniform and diſtinguiſhed zeal.

GEORGE I. and II. thoroughly ſenſible how heartily the whole body of Proteſtant Diſſenters were attached to their perſons and families, ſhel-

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tered them to the utmoſt of their power from the malice of perſecutors, though they could not reſtore to them all their natural claims, as good members of ſociety, and loyal affectionate ſubjects; which it was the earneſt wiſh of both theſe ſovereigns to have done.

In the preſent reign, the Diſſenters have gained ſome conſiderable advantages, which ought to be recorded with reſpect and gratitude. In 1767, the Houſe of Lords made an important deciſion, confirming the ſentence of the judges, in favour of Diſſenting gentlemen who refuſed ſerving the office of *Sheriff*, becauſe they could not in conſcience take the ſacrament at church as a qualification; of whom many had been fined for ſuch refuſal. *Allen Evans*, Eſq; conteſted this point with the city of London, who had carried the cauſe into all the courts. The late earl of *Mansfield* diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a moſt eloquent ſpeech on the occaſion, in which he ſeverely reprobated the conduct of the city, and all attempts to force conſcience.

In 1777. After much oppoſition from the biſhops, and ſeveral unſucceſsful applications, a bill was paſſed to enlarge the *Toleration-act*, by exempting diſſenting-miniſters and ſchool-maſters from a ſubſcription to the doctrinal articles of the church of England, and ſubſtituting a declaration of their belief in the Bible as containing a divine revelation.

Repeated applications to parliament have been made in this reign for a repeal of the *Teſt* and *Corporation-acts*, whereby the Diſſenters are rendered ineligible to civil offices and poſts under government without receiving the ſacrament in the eſtabliſhed church. Their leading motives were, the removal of the ſtigma fixed upon them by theſe acts, and the reſcuing a ſacred ordinance from a profane

profane abuſe. Had they ſucceeded, they would merely have been *eligible* to offices of truſt; not one Diſſenter in ten thouſand would have obtained any influence or received any emolument. But they not only found themſelves warmly oppoſed by the legiſlature, but groſsly abuſed by their fellow-citizens. Had they attempted to ſeize the whole government into their hands (which indeed the pretended "friends to church and king," inſinuated to be their aim) a louder clamour could hardly have been raiſed throughout the kingdom.

The extraordinary revolution in *France*, contributed not a little to ſtir up the worſt paſſions of their adverſaries, as many among the Diſſenters united with other friends of liberty, to teſtify their joy at an event which promiſed to have an important influence on the proſperity of Britain, and of all Europe. The unforeſeen and lamentable exceſſes committed in France, eſpecially the extirpation of the royal-family, were aſcribed to thoſe licentious principles which the Diſſenters were charged with inculcating, and the moſt ſcandalous outrages were in conſequence committed on the houſes, the property, and the perſons of many diſtinguiſhed individuals, of the moſt unexceptionable characters. Several of their meetings were diſturbed, ſome of their places of worſhip burnt, and their miniſters groſsly abuſed, ſo as hardly to eſcape with their lives. In the town of *Birmingham* in particular, ſuch exceſſes were committed as will fix a laſting ſtigma on the characters of Engliſhmen in the cloſe of the eighteenth century.

The vile clamour raiſed of late, by the artifice of the enemies to the true ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, againſt the Diſſenters, its genuine friends, has begun to ſubſide. Whether or not they

they will ever regain the confidence of government, and obtain a redress of grievances of which they justly complain, remains a matter of uncertainty. It is however a ground of satisfaction, that rational liberty appears to be gaining such a firm establishment in various parts of the world, that the conduct of its enemies in this country, daily becomes of less and less consequence.

APPENDIX,

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

REMARKS ON ESTABLISHMENTS:

WITH

Some Strictures on the Churchman's Anſwer

TO THE

PROTESTANT DISSENTER'S CATECHISM.

DR. HADDON SMITH, in his *Anſwer* to Mr. *Palmer's Catechiſm* *, charges the *Boſtonians* with intolerance, for their oppoſition to the *Quebec-bill*. Juſtly indeed were they alarmed at an act which not merely tolerated Catholics but *eſtabliſhed* Popery and tyranny, not only in *Canada*, but over a large extent of country never included in its boundaries before. An unfriendly diſpoſition to *Papiſts* is unfairly charged on a people amongſt whom they lived perfectly unmoleſted, and under leſs reſtraint than in *Great-Britain*, whoſe code of laws reſpecting them was at that time cruel, and and is now far from liberal. Whoſoever is acquainted with *America* muſt acknowledge, that the principles adopted by the Engliſh Nonconformiſts are completely favourable to the rights of conſcience. Long before the idea of independency was

* The writer of this is warranted to ſay, that had the author of that Catechiſm apprehended any competent judges, either among Churchmen or Diſſenters, could ſeriouſly think Dr. Smith's performance, either in point of argument or language, to merit a reply, he would have written one long ago. A few remarks upon it appeared in the *Diſſenter's Magazine*, from whence a ſufficient idea of it may be formed.

entertained,

entertained, all parties of Chriſtians enjoyed equal ſecurity and equal priviſeges. Epiſcopalians are not obliged to contribute to the ſupport of any miniſters but their own; nor have biſhops met with any moleſtation in the execution of their ſpiritual functions.

Dr. *Smith* charges the Diſſenters with being concerned in the ſhameful riots of 1780, though it does not appear that a ſingle Diſſenter was convicted, or that one regular diſſenting miniſter belonged to the Proteſtant aſſociation, which conſiſted entirely of perſons zealouſly attached to the doctrinal articles of the church of England and to the Athanaſian creed. The unhappy man who headed them was a member of the Scotch eſtabliſhment, but his conduct could reflect diſgrace on no party, as he was evidently deranged. If Diſſenters retain perſecuting principles, let the church ſet a good example, by repealing, if not the *Teſt-act*, at leaſt ſuch ſevere ſtatutes enacted againſt perſons purely on a religious account; which earl *Stanhope* laboured after, and the biſhops oppoſed. If all parties are ſtill in the wrong, amendment muſt begin ſomewhere. To cenſure a comparatively ſmall party on groundleſs ſurmiſes for holding perſecuting principles, whilſt ſo ſtrong, ſo rich, ſo numerous a body moſt tenaciouſly graſps the iron rod of oppreſſion, is abſurd and cowardly. The church may act magnanimouſly without any danger, and thus effectually put to ſhame every perſecuting ſeparatiſt; but as that is not likely to be the caſe, it is hoped a little reflection on their own inconſiſtency will produce this effect, if there really are thoſe to whom Dr. *Smith*'s inſinuations may apply. Religious communion, many of them refuſe to hold with thoſe who differ in what they deem eſſential points, but any thing like *perſecution* for conſcience-

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ſake all diſclaim, nor where they govern does it appear in their conduct or on their code.

Another objection made to Diſſenters is their *enmity to all civil eſtabliſhments of religion.* The fact is admitted. Formerly, indeed, they entertained no doubt but that ſome religion ought to be eſtabliſhed, though a difference of opinion ſubſiſted reſpecting forms and modes. Had the governors of the church of England yielded to the wiſhes of the moderate Puritans, epiſcopacy and a liturgy would have been almoſt univerſally and gladly adopted. Had thoſe conceſſions been made at the Reſtoration which king *Charles*'s declaration from *Breda* led the Nonconformiſts to expect, few would have declined entering the pale of the national church, and the alterations propoſed at the Revolution, if paſſed into a law, would have produced the ſame effect at that period. Since the Revolution, the Diſſenters, particularly thoſe denominated in England *Preſbyterians*, have expreſſed an increaſing diſlike to creeds and articles of human invention, and pleaded ſtrongly for making the ſcriptures the only rule, without inſiſting on a *ſubſcription* to particular explanations as a qualification for church-membership or the paſtoral office. An idea that civil eſtabliſhments in religion were eſſentially wrong, never prevailed till within theſe few years. Now, amongſt Diſſenters of every denomination, and all who ſtudy the evidences and attend ſeriouſly to the real nature and deſign of Chriſtianity, the number is daily increaſing who appear fully convinced that national eſtabliſhments are quite unneceſſary to the ſupport of true religion, and actually prejudicial to its intereſt.

Our Saviour expreſsly declared to his diſciples, *My kingdom is not of this world*, but *the kingdom of God is within you*, Luke xvii. 21. by which muſt be meant, that his religion conſiſted in a ſubjec-

tion of the heart and ſoul to the will of our heavenly father. This proves clearly and evidently that it may ſubſiſt, without deriving any ſupport or encouragement from human power and authority. For the three firſt centuries it ſubſiſted not only without ſuch countenance and aid, but under direct oppoſition and amidſt violent perſecution.

Since civil eſtabliſhments of Chriſtianity commenced, the majority of profeſſing Chriſtians have been mere men of the world, conforming to whatever the governors of their reſpective countries enacted, or deſpiſing or cruelly treating all who retained or adopted different modes; eſpecially thoſe virtuous faithful few, who through each ſucceeding age bore their teſtimony in behalf of Chriſtianity as a divine ſyſtem, deſigned to regulate the conduct and comfort the ſoul of each individual who ſhould embrace it; and not to be an inſtrument of raiſing any ſet of men to temporal power and grandeur. Such frequently, to the hazard of liberty and life, diſſented from the national churches; and others who from different motives conformed, laboured as much as they could to lead their fellow-creatures into worthy notions of the religion of Jeſus. Theſe have been the *ſalt of the earth*, preſerving the general maſs from entire corruption, and the means of preſerving ſome in a conſiderable degree of purity. At length thoſe ſincere believers are greatly multiplied, who entertain a firm perſuaſion, that all civil eſtabliſhments of religion have a direct *tendency*, in their whole frame and conſtitution, to make bigots, hypocrites, and infidels. That this is matter of fact may eaſily be made to appear.

They make *bigots*: for the greater part not exerciſing thought and reaſon, and finding that the moſt numerous, wealthy, and powerful, in their reſpective countries, profeſs the ſame faith they do, take

take it for granted that their church, whether Popiſh or Preſbyterian, Lutheran or Calviniſtical, Mahometan or Heathen, muſt be the true church, and that all who differ are out of favour with the Almighty and involved in damnable or dangerous error. — In proportion as men are ignorant and unenlightened their bigotry is increaſed; the more implicit is their obedience to their ſpiritual rulers, and the more ſtrong their averſion to all of a different perſuaſion, whom they generally deſpiſe, frequently hate, and ſometimes cruelly oppreſs and deſtroy. When artful men, to anſwer any merely political purpoſes, raiſe a cry that *their church is in danger*, they can bring down ruin on the heads of thoſe who oppoſe any of their ſchemes, though particular ſentiments in religion be entirely unconnected either with a diſlike or approbation of them. It was but a few years ſince that ſeveral *Aſiatic* provinces were likely to be freed from the *Ottoman* yoke; when their principal leader, a man of conſummate prudence, diſcretion, and valour, thought it would give him a deciſive advantage over the grand ſeignior's army if he could engage the ſervices of ſome European engineers. One of the moſt ingenious and uſeful being a Chriſtian, a clamour was immediately raiſed that the true faith was in danger, and the plan for liberating his countrymen fruſtrated by religious bigotry, worked upon by political artifice.

Nothing will operate ſo powerfully in *Turkey* towards removing a vizier, as for thoſe who want his office to repreſent him as a favourer of "the "Chriſtian dogs." Thoſe Africans who worſhip a ſnake reſent as ſtrongly any injury done to this reptile, as a true Scotchman would an attack on the kirk, or an Engliſhman an affront offered to mother-church, though as ignorant of the nature of a *church* as the butcher, who ſtriking the wall

of the parish-church with his stick, swore "he "would stand by the old bitch as long as he "lived."

Great is Diana of Ephesus, has been and ever will be the cry, whilst religious establishments subsist; only each country sets up a Diana of its own, by supporting which numbers are materially benefited. The historical narration, *Acts* xix. is not merely interesting as a fact, but forms a representation, exactly as if drawn up by prophecy, of what would continue to take place every where amongst the adherents to national religions, whenever their idol, saint, church, kirk, or the ministers of either should be spoken against. Attempts made to call the attention of zealots to sense, reason, and truth, are always hazardous in proportion to the abuses that have gained ground, and the ignorance which prevails.

The mob at Ephesus were bigots: *Demetrius* and the craftsmen hypocrites; divers of them it may be a compound of both. Their *craft by which they got their wealth* was in danger, had their fellow-citizens been brought to the knowledge of the one living and true God, and the profession of pure Christianity. They therefore pretended great zeal for the honour of their goddess to the deluded people, on whom it was their interest to impose.

In several countries to differ from the establishment, exposes a man to utter ruin. In others more moderate, to material injury; and as lord *Kaimes* somewhere observes, "Conformity is always, at least, very convenient." This circumstance alone, will produce a compliance; and often loud professions of warm attachment, in selfish and ambitious men: even where it does not lead to a direct violation of the dictates of conscience, it will effectually operate as a check on free examination and inquiry; so useful to improve the

the faculties of the human mind. Numbers who deſpiſe the national forms and doctrines in their hearts, will be either loudly zealous for, or paſſively comply with them, as may beſt ſuit their tempers or their intereſts. This of courſe tends to make *infidels*.

Some perſons naturally humane, ſeeing the exceſſes into which a religious profeſſion often leads men, reject all ſyſtems and forms as hurtful to ſociety. Others having never duly and ſeriouſly weighed matters, finding how many pretend a zeal for, or yield a compliance with, what they with good reaſon ſuppoſe, their judgments diſapprove, imagine that all the profeſſors of religion are deceivers, at leaſt that a judicious belief no where exiſts, though they will poſſibly acknowledge that a blind faith may.

Thoſe excellent unanſwerable defences of religion, natural and revealed, which have been written by miniſters of the different worldly eſtabliſhments now exiſting in Chriſtendom, loſe their effect upon numbers who cannot reconcile their minds to the doctrines and forms of any national church whatſoever. Such will never be convinced that writers are ſincere who direct them to the *ſcriptures* as the *only rule*, with grave exhortations to form their ideas of Chriſtianity entirely from *them*, whilſt theſe ſelf ſame writers interpret ſcripture in a very different manner, from the *creeds* and *articles* to which they have given a ſolemn aſſent. Even thoſe who attempt to reconcile pure ſcripture with the doctrines of particular churches, fail of doing it ſo ſatisfactorily as the truth and importance of the ſcriptures themſelves may be defended, and the moſt judicious and able advocates for revelation generally decline this taſk. Now writers may give juſt views of Chriſtianity, and publiſh ſuch apologies as will convince every

impartial inquirer, though it may be impoſſible for them, on any principles of Chriſtian integrity or common honeſty, to vindicate their repeated ſolemn declarations of aſſent and conſent to the *Athanaſian-creed*, and all and every thing contained in the *articles* and *liturgy* of the church of England, which in various particulars are inconſiſtent with the general tenor of their writings, and all pretences whatever to candour and charity.

Sceptics will not conſider, perhaps ſome of them do not know, that though many learned, and in moſt reſpects good men, have been ſo much enſlaved by early prejudices or blinded by ſelf-intereſt, as to receive doctrines both unreaſonable and unſcriptural; *others* have thrown off the ſhackles of education and been wholly actuated, not by a deſire of preferment, but by a love of truth. Sceptics who will not make allowances for thoſe who ſubſcribe to what they do not really believe, under the plea of "preſerving peace; decently ſubmitting to the will of the majority; complying with public prejudices for the ſake of being uſeful; the neceſſity they lie under of providing for themſelves, their families," &c. ſhould remember, that in every age numbers have ſacrificed all worldly advantages purely to keep a good conſcience. Sceptics who ſuſpect the ſincerity of all the miniſters of endowed churches ſhould conſider—that beſides the large catalogue of thoſe miniſters who have given the fulleſt and moſt unequivocal proofs of integrity and diſintereſtedneſs, by declining rich and honourable preferment when attainable, and even preſſed upon their acceptance; that attractive as worldly eſtabliſhments are, large numbers have ſacrificed every preſent intereſt and comfort rather than conform to any of them. Some of the moſt eminent defenders of Chriſtianity abroad and at home, by foregoing all the advantages of religious

eſtabliſhments,

eſtabliſhments, and taking up their lot amongſt a party deſpiſed by the great, and hated by the mob, have given the fulleſt evidence of their ſincerity.

In this country a majority of the moſt eminent defenders of revelation, *Baxter*, *Doddrige*, *Foſter*, *Chandler*, *Benſon*, *Leland*, *Lardner*, &c. gave every proof of being influenced purely by that ſpirit of religion which enables its diſciples to overcome the world. When unbelivers have effectually refuted what they have written, to ſay nothing of innumerable others; then and not till then may Chriſtians be accuſed of believing without evidence, or being the dupes of the ſelfiſh.

Mr. *Paine*, with a vanity truly ridiculous, compares his attack on the books of ſcripture, to a man going through a wood with an axe and cutting down the trees, which though *prieſts* may ſtick in again, they will never grow. Chriſtianity however is not an object of concern to thoſe only whom he names *prieſts*. Every rational creature is equally intereſted in its precious glorious truths and promiſes. Should every page written by prieſts of all denominations periſh for ever, to ſay nothing concerning the writings of illuſtrious foreign laymen, the noble teſtimonies of *Bacon* and *Boyle*, *Locke* and *Newton*, *Milton* and *Addiſon*, will bear conviction to every impartial inquirer. The judgment of that late wonderful genius, unparalleled ſcholar, ſtrenuous patriot, and upright judge, Sir *William Jones*, of whoſe valuable exertions mankind were bereaved before he had attained the age of fifty, will command more attention than a hundred prejudiced infidels. He wrote at the end of his Bible: "I have regularly and attentively "read theſe Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion "that this volume, independently of its divine "origin, contains more ſublimity and beauty, "more pure morality, more important hiſtory,

"and

" and finer ſtrains of poetry and eloquence, than " can be collected from all other books, in " whatever age or language they may have been " compoſed."

All the learning, all the reaſon, and all the common ſenſe of unprejudiced and virtuous minds, will join in approving the pure goſpel. Worldly eſtabliſhments in an age of reaſon may indiſcriminately fall, and that to the advantage of genuine Chriſtianity, which muſt ſtill exiſt and triumph. Millions will rejoice in the exceeding great and precious promiſes of the everlaſting goſpel; and deliver down the glad-tidings to millions more, till all ſhall be accompliſhed which Jehovah hath promiſed, and for which his ſervants have hoped. Whilſt numbers who love the goſpel, behold with complete ſatisfaction the overthrow of a domineering Popiſh church in France, and a Preſbyterian one in Holland, thoſe ſerious Chriſtians who imagine that eſtabliſhments are neceſſary to provide the multitude with the means of religious information and improvement, may make themſelves perfectly eaſy. Religious worſhip in ſome form or other will conſtantly find ſupport, and when the ſtate gives no preference to one form above another, truth will be moſt likely to prevail.

So many perſons of coveteous diſpoſitions and ambitious views, will not enter into the miniſterial office when they muſt depend wholly for acceptance on the popularity or eſteem they may acquire by the exertion of their mental abilities, and the diſplay of amiable diſpoſitions. But ſerious, conſcientious, diligent inſtructors, will always be raiſed up by Providence and encouraged by ſociety, as long as ever their labours and ſervices can be rendered uſeful.

Large

Large as the public revenues of the church are, yet how many chapels in and about the metropolis and other large towns have been erected by the voluntary ſubſcriptions, and are now ſupported by the free contributions, of thoſe belonging to the eſtabliſhment, who cannot procure accommodations in, or who prefer theſe chapels to their own pariſh churches. The afternoon preachers in our capital, receive no other recompence for that ſervice than what is freely given.

Diſſenters, who are obliged to contribute to the national worſhip as much as if they attended it, yet, purſuing the dictates of conſcience, readily put themſelves to material expence in building ſeparate places, and maintaining thoſe miniſters whom they approve. Were they exempted like the Epiſcopalians in *America*, from this unjuſt taxation, their ability to ſupport what they judge a more pure and edifying ſervice would be increaſed.

If in particular diſtricts, ſome churches would remain unſupplied, deprived of national ſupport, religion would not ſuffer more than it does from the manner in which many are ſerved now. Whilſt poor curates hurry from pariſh to pariſh for a miſerable pittance, and thoſe who receive the profits of rich livings ſettle in places of polite reſort, and with their families countenance every faſhionable folly, the cauſe of religion is more injured than if ſuch churches were deſtitute and fewer profeſſed teachers exiſted. Such large ſums are raiſed by the voluntary contributions of ſerious Chriſtians, both in and out of the eſtabliſhment, for the ſupport of chapels, meeting-houſes, miniſters, and ſtudents, as may afford ſufficient ground to believe that proviſion will always be cheerfully made for carrying on the public ſervices of religion. Its miniſters, likewiſe, if depending wholly on uſeful exertions, would prove more generally ſuch as divines ought

ought to be, than now, when the profeſſion is made chiefly a trade, enabling a ſet of men to live and rule in the preſent world, inſtead of an employment devoted to the preparing rational and immortal beings for another. What zeal and generoſity have been lately diſplayed, almoſt entirely by thoſe who are at much expence in ſupporting their peculiar modes of religion, to ſend miſſionaries to heathens. Surely there can never be wanting thoſe who will effectually provide for the preaching of the goſpel in their native land!

In *Scotland*, where Preſbyterianiſm is eſtabliſhed, and the country is poor, compared with England, yet epiſcopal churches, miniſters, and biſhops, are ſupported by the volutary contributions of their hearers. The number of Seceders alſo, that is of thoſe who ſeparate from the public national kirk, when they diſapprove of the miniſter impoſed on the pariſh to which they belong, is very large and daily increaſing. Scotch livings, like the Engliſh ones, being in the gift of private patrons, the miniſter preſented is often diſagreeable to the people. In ſuch caſes the Scots act with a ſpirit which does not appear amongſt the members of the Engliſh church, for they will ſeparate from the perſon impoſed on them againſt their wills, and maintain one whoſe character and abilities they approve. What prevents the members of the Engliſh church from acting thus, when on ſufficient grounds diſſatisfied with their appointed paſtor, is probably a ſuperſtitious idea of the neceſſity of aſſembling in ſome conſecrated place for divine worſhip conducted by a miniſter epiſcopally ordained. Were not this a prevailing notion, the ſerious inhabitants of numerous pariſhes would promote their own edification and ſerve the intereſt of genuine religion by forſaking their appointed guides, and meeting together in ſome convenient place, where

their

their own liturgy and ſome ſermon taken from the admired volumes of their own divines might be read by ſuch grave perſons as would undertake the ſolemn office.

If a law had been enacted, in the days of ignorance, that every pariſh ſhould maintain a *ſurgeon*, but this ſurgeon inſtead of being choſen by the inhabitants ſhould be appointed by the lord of the manor, who might beſtow the office on any child or favourite, however unqualified for the buſineſs, or averſe from every thing relating to it, excepting the emoluments, what would the people do? Certainly under any bodily misfortune, they would rather pay one of whoſe ſkill they entertained a good opinion, than call in the aid of the public practitioner, even though obliged to attend them without bringing in a bill of charges. If men regarded the improvement of their minds, as much as the health of their bodies, they would no more depend upon mere ſtate divines than ſtate ſurgeons.

Dr. *Johnſon*, bigotted as he was to conſecrated places, yet in a very pleaſing copy of verſes, he celebrated the piety of a young lady who, in a remote part of Scotland, conducted the worſhip of a ſmall ſociety according to the form preſcribed by the Engliſh church. A young gentleman appeared to all conſiderate perſons, in a truly reſpecable light, who being a member of the epiſcopal church at *Boſton*, juſt before the rupture between this country and America, officiated to a large and reſpectable congregation for ſeveral months whilſt deſtitute of a regular miniſter. In the *Scilly* iſlands the public ſervice of the Engliſh church is frequently performed by laymen. Were it more generally done, public morals and public piety would be better promoted than by attending ſuch clergymen

clergymen as have no other qualifications, than being regularly ordained and legally inducted.

Ireland affords a ſtriking proof that an eſtabliſhment is by no means neceſſary * for the majority. The Papiſts there exceed the Proteſtants by three to one; and of the Proteſtants by far the moſt numerous party are Diſſenters; ſo that in many pariſhes the clergyman and his family are the only perſons belonging to the eſtabliſhed church, abounding as it does in wealth and honour. The Papiſts, though for the moſt part wretchedly poor, and labouring under various civil diſqualifications, nevertheleſs provide chapels, ſupport prieſts, biſhops, archbiſhops, and a regular ſupply of ſtudents for the ſacred office. Sincere Chriſtians never will neglect to provide for the ſupport of thoſe public inſtitutions of religion which they may deem eſſential and uſeful. To force unbelievers, whether Idolaters, Mahometans, Jews, or Deiſts, to ſupport any form of Chriſtian worſhip, is unjuſt, oppreſſive, perſecuting, and naturally tends to beget and to ſtrengthen thoſe prejudices which granting equal liberty to all would moſt probably remove.

The ſuppoſed neceſſity of *an union between church and ſtate* muſt operate as a conſiderable hinderance to the reception of Chriſtianity amongſt thoſe regular governments where Mahometaniſm or Heatheniſm prevail. If a large colony of Chriſtians ſhould emigrate to *China*, with a view to ſettle there, under the preſent wiſe and good emperor, (who though a Heathen appears by his conduct, more actuated by the genuine ſpirit of Chriſtianity than moſt of thoſe potentates who are denominated

* Though the author thinks all civil eſtabliſhments of religion to be unneceſſary and antichriſtian, he would never wiſh to ſee ſecular power exerted to overturn any of them. He is for the uſe of no *force* but that of rational argument.

Chriſtians)

Chriſtians)—if this colony aſked leave to build churches, erect colleges, &c. the emperor would naturally make ſome inquiry about their opinions, and if, being of different ſects, they ſhould honeſtly and fairly acknowledge them, what would be the reſult?

Thoſe *Papiſts*, who pay an implicit obedience to the pope, and think him divinely authorized to abſolve ſubjects from oaths of allegiance to their reſpective ſovereigns, and that they are bound in duty to denounce damnation in the next world, and contrive the deſtruction in this, of all who refuſe to adopt their faith, would hardly obtain a ſettlement. A diſcovery of ſuch principles, heretofore occaſioned the expulſion of the *Jeſuits* from *China*, and the utter deſtruction of all who bare the Chriſtian name in *Japan*.

Leaving ſuch out of the queſtion, ſuppoſe a Proteſtant of archbiſhop *Laud*'s principles, ſpeaking the real ſentiments of his party, ſhould acknowledge—that they thought themſelves bound in duty to attempt the converſion of his imperial majeſty and all his ſubjects; and if ever they became a majority in numbers, or in any way poſſeſſed of ſufficient power, they ſhould oblige all the inhabitants of the Chineſe empire, whether of the ancient religion of their country, or any ſect of Chriſtians differing from themſelves, to ſupport their miniſters and biſhops; to bear an equal proportion of the expences attending the building of churches, colleges, &c. and to be amenable to their ſpiritual courts; and that if any ſhould refuſe to comply with ſuch forms and ceremonies as they might invent or adopt in acts of worſhip, they ſhould claim and exerciſe a power of fining, impriſoning, or otherwiſe puniſhing them as the heads of their church might determine, and even ſentence thoſe they deemed refractory or here-

tical to baniſhment or death—in what light would the propoſal be received?

Suppoſe another, uttering the avowed ſentiments of the preſent bench of *Engliſh biſhops*, ſhould verbally renounce all right of enforcing conformity by penal laws, but plead ſtrongly againſt repealing ſuch as cruel perſecutors or miſtaken bigots while in power had enacted in their own country, and gravely attempt to perſuade the emperor, that theſe laws might operate *in terrorem*, though it was declared and known that they were never to be executed, but that their bare exiſtence as a dead letter would check the propagation of error. Should this wiſe potentate ſmile or frown at what common ſenſe and natural uprightneſs would deem ridiculous ſophiſtry or contemptible hypocriſy,—the plain declaration of one ſtyling himſelf a *moderate churchman* might obtain a more attentive hearing. He, renouncing perſecution, would yet claim for his party, when predominant, an excluſive right to all ſtate offices of honour, truſt, and profit; or, if policy dictated in particular circumſtances the diſpenſing with any religious teſt as a qualification for civil offices, he would ſtill inſiſt on the right of obliging all the inhabitants of the empire, whatever they thought of the forms eſtabliſhed, to contribute equally to the expences of this worſhip, and the ſupport of its miniſters, with thoſe who approved and attended.—The emperor, not prejudiced in favour of Chriſtianity, would certainly heſitate at leaſt about admitting into his dominions perſons who avowed ſuch principles.

Now let a genuine Chriſtian ſtand forth; one ſincerely believing the truths revealed in the Holy Scriptures, but eſteeming religion as a pure, perſonal concern. His language in behalf of himſelf and friends would be to the following purpoſe.—"We are fully convinced that the Being who made

made the heavens and the earth, revealed himſelf to Moſes and the prophets as is recorded in our ſacred writings, and that Jeſus Chriſt is a teacher who came from God. The ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament inform us what God is, what duties we owe to him, how pardon, acceptance, and favour are granted; and complete eternal happineſs after death are therein expreſsly promiſed to the believing and obedient. We are perſuaded that to believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and ſtrive after a conformity to his example and teachings, will add unſpeakably to the preſent comfort, and be followed with the endleſs felicity of all his faithful diſciples. We ſhall think it our duty to inſtruct and perſuade all who will hear us, to ſtudy the goſpel and make an open profeſſion of Chriſtianity. But however numerous we may become, we utterly renounce, as unreaſonable and unjuſt, all attempts to injure others, either in perſon or property, and all claim to any kind of ſupport for our worſhip or its miniſters, than what each individual may voluntarily beſtow; and if at any future time only a few perſons ſhould remain in the whole empire unconverted to our faith, thoſe few ſhould ſtill enjoy every civil immunity, partake of all our good offices, and be treated with humane, brotherly affection." Would not the emperor acknowledge this party to have the faireſt claim to his favour? and would not they, if any, be the moſt likely to obtain admittance into his dominions?

All national eſtabliſhments whatever, are quite inconſiſtent with that grand rule of equity ſo ſolemnly enjoined by the bleſſed Jeſus. *Therefore all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them: for this is the law and the prophets*, Mat. vii. 12. No ſincerely religious man would willingly ſupport any ſyſtem of faith

or mode of worſhip which he diſapproved; therefore no man or body of men can juſtly exact ſuch ſupport from others.

Beſides this general command, there is a particular injunction delivered by our divine inſtructor to his diſciples, which, had it been obſerved, no civil eſtabliſhments of Chriſtianity could ever have taken place, and when again obeyed muſt ſubvert them every where. *Luke* xxii. 24—26. *And there was alſo a ſtrife amongſt them, which of them ſhould be accounted the greateſt. And he ſaid unto them, the kings of the Gentiles exerciſe lordſhip over them; and they that exerciſe authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye ſhall not be ſo: but he that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve.* This does not merely recommend humility towards each other, but abſolutely forbids the exerciſe of any thing like that ſpiritual dominion which is and muſt be uſurped, in a greater or a leſs degree by all national churches. As members of ſociety at large, it is a duty both of natural and revealed religion to obey magiſtrates. But a Chriſtian church founded on pure ſcripture principles, can claim no temporal authority whatever, even over its own members, much leſs over others. It can be nothing more than a voluntary brotherhood; and any individual who from his ſtation, wealth, or talents may be chief, conſidered as a man, ought as a Chriſtian, to be only diſtinguiſhed by being the moſt ready to every office of condeſcenſion and love.

Sir *G. Saville*, that ſound patriot and exemplary Chriſtian, in his excellent ſpeech ſupporting the diſſenting miniſters application to parliament, thus cenſured (as far as memory ſerves, which cannot do juſtice to his eloquent expreſſions) thoſe who preſume to protect the church of Chriſt by human aid. "Methinks I ſee a majeſtic edifice, whoſe

"foundation

" foundation is in the centre of the earth, and its " ſummit far above the clouds. A number of " moles are buſily employed around, induſtriouſly " throwing up their little hillocks. Being aſked " what they are doing? they reply with vaſt im- " portance,—We are raiſing mounds to defend " that noble building." Thus ridiculous are the efforts of all who attempt defending the glorious ſyſtem of Chriſtianity by human aid. The church of Chriſt is *founded upon a rock*, and he who is truth itſelf, has aſſured us, that *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

" A Review of Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments in Europe," by Mr. *Graham*, of *Newcaſtle*, is the moſt complete treatiſe ever publiſhed on this important ſubject; the author of which is a believer in the doctrinal articles of the church of England.

The Diſſenters on account of their diſlike of eſtabliſhments, and of certain meaſures of government, have been repreſented as *enemies to their country*. Whereas they think their principles moſt friendly to it. The following extract from a church of England divine ſhall conclude this performance.

No Diſſenter could ever more juſtly have expreſſed the general ſentiments of his friends than the author of that valuable work, *Sacred Exerciſes*, drawn up many years before the political queſtions were thought of which now agitate the public mind, for that ſeminary of loyalty *Weſtminſter-ſchool*; in the prayer following the leſſon relating the lamentation of Jeſus over Jeruſalem, B. iii. Leſſon 10th, p. 159. 6th Edit.

" Oh God, by whoſe providence our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in thus lamenting the approaching ruin of Jeruſalem, gave a noble proof of his ardent concern and love for his country, endue us, we beſeech thee, in like manner with an hearty affection

tion for the nation to which we belong, and a ſtrong induſtrious zeal for its real welfare.

"And may this love of our country be generous and diſintereſted: let us, imitating the great ſpirit of the ſame bleſſed Jeſus, love it equally whether we are enriched with poſſeſſions in it, or only ſhare its common protection and its laws: whether we are honoured and encouraged in it, or ſhare his fate who for all his benefits met with nothing from his countrymen but the greateſt neglect and contempt, envy and ingratitude.

"But grant, O Lord, above all, that we may learn, that how much ſoever we love our country, yet we are never to wiſh any thing for its advantage, which would be injurious or oppreſſive to other nations, who are all equally thy children and our brethren, imitating in this alſo our bleſſed Saviour, who though continually employed in endeavouring to prevent the ruin of his country, and to make it happy by the ſureſt means, the reforming its corruptions and vices, yet never once exerted his power in conferring on it any thing of (what the Jews then ſo much deſired) ſovereignty and empire over other nations. Grant us always this wiſdom through the ſame Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord, Amen."

Biſhop Horſley, who, as dean of Weſtminſter, is head of the ſeminary for the uſe of which this excellent form was heretofore prepared, would ſerve the intereſt of true religion and ſound patriotiſm very materially, if he could prevail on the houſes of Lords and Commons, to adopt it in their daily ſervice.

FINIS.

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